



# Agenda Item 3

## Minute

**FALKIRK COUNCIL**

**Minute of meeting of the EXECUTIVE held within the Municipal Buildings, Falkirk on Tuesday 14 August 2018 at 9.30 a.m.**

**Councillors:** David Alexander  
Robert Bissett  
Gary Bouse  
Joan Coombes  
Paul Garner  
Dennis Goldie (Convener)  
Nigel Harris  
Gordon Hughes  
James Kerr  
Cecil Meiklejohn  
Malcolm Nicol  
Alan Nimmo

**Officers:** Ross Fenwick, Waste Manager  
Jack Frawley, Committee Services Officer  
Rhona Geisler, Director of Development Services  
Colin Moodie, Chief Governance Officer  
Kenneth Lawrie, Chief Executive  
Lesley Malkin, Project Manager  
Robert Naylor, Director of Children's Services  
Brian Pirie, Democratic Services Manager  
Bryan Smail, Chief Finance Officer  
Stuart Ritchie, Director of Corporate & Housing Services

**Also Attending:** Councillor Laura Murtagh, Public Protection Portfolio Holder (for item EX46)

**EX38. Order of Business**

The Convener varied the order of business. The following items have been recorded in the order that they were taken at the meeting.

**EX39. Council Headquarters Project**

With reference to Standing Order 33, the convener advised that a deputation request had been received on behalf of the Healthy High Street Group to be heard in relation to this item. The convener confirmed that the request had been made in accordance with Standing Orders. The Executive agreed to hear the deputation.

Margaret Foy addressed the Executive, following which members asked questions. The convener thanked the deputation for addressing the Executive.

The Executive considered a report by the Leader of the Council which set out the Administration's position on the Council's headquarters project. In preparation of the report advice from officers had been sought to take cognisance of the status of the headquarters (HQ) project, its implications in terms of the Council's strategic property review, financial position and risk and the progress of work on the regeneration of the town centre.

Since May, the prospects for Falkirk town centre had become more bleak. Announcements had been made on the closure of Marks & Spencer and Falkirk Bus Station. This reinforced the need to revitalise the town centre. This increased the importance of the Council reaching a decision on delivery of its headquarters project. The Administration had made a commitment to town centre regeneration in its manifesto. By locating the replacement headquarters facility in the town centre, regeneration could be stimulated

The Administration's vision for the town centre and the headquarters project was that the development should be taken forward as a partnership venture, combining investment from a range of partners and invigorating the town centre with a new sense of purpose.

A town centre working group had been formed involving the Council, Falkirk BID and other town centre stakeholders. The group had reinforced the need for urgent action and sought clarity on the means to deliver much needed investment in the town centre. The Administration proposed that the group should develop a regeneration action plan including recommendations for delivery of the headquarters facility.

The report detailed requirements for a replacement headquarters facility as:-

- a minimum of 300 workstations.
- a democratic/HQ core office for elected members, senior management team and civic accommodation.
- ancillary accommodation i.e. reception, IT data room, meetings, catering and related welfare facilities etc.
- modern office accommodation to meet 'back' office, agile working needs for up to 1200 staff, to help meet Council of the Future ambitions.
- access to flexible space and capacity for other public, private and third sector partners to work alongside the Council.

The report stated that to replace Falkirk Town Hall a modern Arts Centre facility would be required proposed as a 500 seat facility, with reception, rehearsal and catering facilities. It was highlighted that this project might

take place alongside provision of the office and civic headquarters facilities or proceed separately.

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

- (1) the vision for Falkirk town centre and new headquarters for the Council including office, civic and arts facilities as set out in para 4.4;
- (2) to progress proposals for delivery of the replacement headquarters facility in the town centre through:
  - (a) the Council's participation in the Falkirk town centre working group to prepare a regeneration action plan with proposals for delivery of the Council headquarters facility and related investment by partners
  - (b) that officers prepare a business case for the proposed replacement headquarters having regard to the Council's financial position
  - (c) an initial specification for a replacement office headquarters facility for a minimum of 300 workstations and associated civic and arts facilities
  - (d) to progress a procurement exercise to seek a preferred site and means of delivering the project
- (3) that a progress report with recommendations for further action be presented to Executive on completion of the above actions to enable a decision to be reached on the headquarters project.

The Executive adjourned at 9.55am to allow consideration of the terms of an amendment intimated by Councillor Goldie and reconvened at 10.05am with all members present as per the sederunt.

Following discussion, Councillor Meiklejohn, with the consent of the convener and Councillor Garner, as her seconder, adjusted the terms of her motion to amend clauses 2(a) and 2(c), in light of the amendment intimated by Councillor Goldie, to read:-

- (a) the Council's participation in the Falkirk town centre working group to prepare a regeneration action plan with proposals for delivery of the Council headquarters facility and related investment by partners, with Council representation on the working group being 8 subject to political balance as follows:-

SNP – 3  
Lab – 2  
Cons – 2  
Ind – 1

- (c) an initial specification for a replacement headquarters office facility with a capacity larger than 300 workstations and associated arts and civic facilities.

The Executive noted that the town centre working group would be chaired by the Leader of the Council. Nominations were sought for the place reserved for an independent member.

Councillor Nicol nominated Provost Buchanan.

Councillor Meiklejohn nominated Councillor Spears.

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

For Provost Buchanan (7) – Councillors Bissett, Coombes, Goldie, Harris, Kerr, Nicol and Nimmo.

For Councillor Spears (5) – Councillors Alexander, Bouse, Garner, Hughes and Meiklejohn.

Provost Buchanan was appointed to the town centre working group.

### **Decision**

**The Executive agreed:-**

**(1) the vision for Falkirk town centre and new headquarters for the Council including office and arts facilities as set out in paragraph 4.4 of the report;**

**(2) to progress proposals for delivery of the replacement headquarters facility in the town centre, through:-**

**(a) the Council's participation in the Falkirk town centre working group to prepare a regeneration action plan with proposals for delivery of the Council headquarters facility and related investment by partners, with Council representation on the working group being 8 subject to political balance as follows:-**

**SNP – 3**

**Lab – 2**

**Cons – 2**

**Ind – 1**

**(b) to appoint Provost Buchanan as the Independent member on the town centre working group with the remaining places being filled by slate to the Chief Governance Officer**

- (c) **that officers prepare a business case for the proposed replacement headquarters having regard to the Council's financial position**
  - (d) **an initial specification for a replacement headquarters office facility with a capacity larger than 300 workstations and associated arts and civic facilities**
  - (e) **to progress a procurement exercise to seek a preferred site and means of delivering the project**
- (3) that a progress report with recommendations for further action be presented to Executive on completion of the above actions to enable a decision to be reached on the headquarters project,**

**EX40. Apologies**

There were no apologies.

**EX41. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**EX42. Minute**

**Decision**

**The minute of the meeting of the Executive held on 12 June 2018 was approved.**

**EX43. Rolling Action Log**

A rolling action log detailing decisions not yet implemented following the previous meeting on 12 June 2018 was provided. Items 427 – Household Recycling Charter: Compliant Collection Service, and 428 – Strategic Property Review – Review of Office Accommodation were subject of reports on the agenda and accordingly fell from the action log.

**Decision**

**The Executive noted the rolling action log.**

#### **EX44. Strategic Property Review – Review of Council Office Front Facing Offices**

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Development Services which provided an update on the progress of work towards meeting the Council's requirements for 'front facing' offices and provided recommendations for progression. Proposals to meet the Council's front facing office requirements were set out in Appendices 1 and 2 to the report.

The office review identified that the Council occupied floorspace in excess of 7000sqm and was "space rich" occupying property inefficiently - i.e. more than double (17sqm per FTE) the aspired occupancy standard of 8sqm per FTE. As the Council moved to agile working for staff as part of 'Council of the Future', space requirements would reduce to meet its aspired occupancy standard. Implementation of the hub and spoke model of front facing offices would allow reduction from 11 to 5 front facing premises.

To intensify usage there would require to be a degree of adaptation and remodelling in the retained properties, costing in the region of £1.8m. If the running costs of the closed buildings were ring fenced and diverted to the retained properties, the savings, along with disposal receipts could provide the budget for the necessary improvement and generate a small saving to the Council after the initial period. Therefore the improvements could be funded as a "spend to save" project. Appendix 1 provided a summary of the proposals and Appendix 2 set out the expenditure programme and anticipated revenue savings.

#### **Decision**

##### **The Executive agreed:-**

- (1) the proposals to meet the Council's front facing office requirements as set out in Appendix 1 and 2 of the report;**
- (2) the proposals for expenditure of £1.8m on a "spend to save" basis to supply upgraded front facing accommodation at Carronbank House, Central Library, Brockville and Grangemouth Social Work Office, and**
- (3) to extend the existing contract works being delivered by East Central Scotland Hub/Maxi Construction for upgrade work to proceed at Carronbank House.**

## **EX45. Household Recycling Charter: Compliant Collection Service**

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Development Services which provided an update on the options for a household recycling charter compliant collection service and the implications of the introduction of a Deposit Return Scheme on the collection service.

At its meeting of 15 May 2018 (ref EX17) the Executive had instructed the Director of Development Services to undertake an analysis of a further option to provide a charter compliant collection service and to report back on the implications of this option along with an update on the proposals of a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) and how this might affect kerbside collections moving forward.

The report set out details of the current collection service, an option based on a Zero Waste Scotland funding offer and the option put forward at the May meeting of the Executive (option 4). Option 4 proposed:-

- blue bin collected every 4 weeks and only used for plastics, metals and cartons.
- brown bin used for paper and card collected every 4 weeks.
- green bin retained for non-recyclable waste collected every 4 weeks
- black box service retained for glass, textiles, small electricals, household batteries (& nappies) collected every two weeks.
- new bin introduced for co-mingled garden and food waste (with an option for households who do not wish to have a garden waste collection to use a food caddy) collected every two weeks.

The report provided the following analysis of option 4:-

- using the brown bin for paper and card would reduce the quality of the material as there will be remnants of garden waste thereby contaminating the paper/card mix.
- if residents do not opt for the new bin for co-mingled garden and food waste, they must use a food caddy. The food caddy would require to be collected weekly to be charter compliant.
- the cost of an additional bin for 73,000 households would be c.£1.47m which would be subject to a further bid to Zero Waste Scotland.
- additional resources would be required to undertake a fortnightly co-mingled garden and food waste service.
- garden waste collection is non-statutory and could be charged. Co-mingling with food waste adds complexity with charging for this service as a food waste collection is statutory and non-chargeable.

In September 2017, the Scottish Government announced the introduction of a Scottish deposit return system for single-use drinks containers. A consultation document 'A Deposit Return Scheme for Scotland' was published. The public consultation period was from 27 June 2018 to 25 September 2018. Early indications were that a deposit return scheme may be introduced within the next two years.

## Decision

### The Executive:-

- (1) noted the content of the report and the analysis of the further option having regard to both service and financial consequences;
- (2) instructed the Director of Development Services to undertake an analysis of a final option, described pictorially below, and report back to the Executive on the implications of this option where a decision will be made. At this time agree on a preferred Household Waste Recycling Charter Compliant Collection Service and authorise the Director of Development Services to submit a funding application to Zero Waste Scotland for equipment to provide the agreed service. Further, to request that she provide Members at the same time, with an update on proposals for the introduction of a Deposit Return Scheme and how this might affect kerbside collection services moving forward taking into consideration the consultation exercise recently carried out by the Scottish Government on DRS.

Metals, Plastics and Cartons	Paper and Card	Glass, Textiles, Small Electricals, Household Batteries (& Nappies)	Non-Recyclable Waste	Garden Waste & Food Waste Bin (Optional)*
				
4-Weekly	4-Weekly	Fortnightly	4-Weekly	Fortnightly
* Note: If the option for a Garden Waste & Food Waste Bin is not taken, residents must use a Grey Food Caddy. This includes properties without gardens.				

## **EX46. Local Governance Review – Policy Development Panel**

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services which invited the establishment of a policy development panel to consider the implications of the Local Governance Review, make recommendations and prepare a response to the review.

At the meeting of Council on 6 December 2017 there was discussion on whether the Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils should be reviewed in light of the quadrennial community council elections. It was suggested that a policy development panel could be established for this purpose and taking cognisance of the Local Governance Review.

At its meeting of 27 June 2018 Council considered a motion asking that officers investigate the possibility of establishing Area Committees and a Petitions Committee. Council agreed to explore the options through by expanding the remit of the existing policy development panel on Community Councils to include consideration of a Petitions Committee and Area Committees within the context of the Local Governance Review.

The Local Governance Review was launched jointly by the Scottish Government and COSLA in December 2017 and invited public sector bodies to consider and identify reforms and powers which could be implemented to strengthen local democracy and decision making. The outcomes of the Review could have far reaching implications for local democracy in Falkirk and across Scotland.

It was proposed that the remit of the policy development panel included:-

- the implications of the Local Governance Review
- drafting a response to the Local Governance Review for approval by the Executive
- the role of community councils in local decision making and the current arrangements for establishing community councils in light of the thrust of the Local Governance Review and having regard to the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015
- the advantages and disadvantages and any other issues in connection with forming a Petitions Committee and/or Area Committees
- any other changes that would enhance participation and engagement and improve local governance.

### **Decision**

**The Executive:-**

- (1) agreed the creation of a policy development panel to consider the Local Governance Review with a remit as set out in section 4.6 of the report;**

**(2) agreed that composition of the policy development panel would be:-**

- 2 – SNP**
- 2 – Labour**
- 1 – Conservative**

**(3) noted that the Leader of the Council would chair the policy development panel.**

#### **EX47. Review of Taxi Fare Scales and Other Charges**

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services which provided details of responses received to the consultation on the proposed changes to the maximum fare scale in use by taxi operators licensed by the Council.

At its meeting on 12 June 2018 (ref EX32) the Executive agreed to instruct the Chief Governance Officer to advertise the revised 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, that a further report would be submitted to the Executive to allow them to be considered and,
- (b) in the event that no written representations are received the proposals would be held as confirmed and formally notified to the consultees.

Six responses to the consultation were received. Five through the consultation hub and one letter direct to the licensing offices. The substance of each response was appended to the report and could be categorised into the following groups:-

- increased charges
- concessionary offering
- soilage charge
- public holidays.

#### **Decision**

**The Executive agreed to the proposed changes to the existing taxi fares and scales with effect from midnight on 30 September 2018.**

#### **EX48. Capital Programmes Outturn**

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services which provided details of the outturn position, subject to final audit review, of the 2017/18 General Fund Services and Housing Capital Programmes.

The capital programmes aimed to deliver priority projects on time and on budget. However, both capital programmes were three year programmes and the nature of the projects therein meant that spend could move between years. As such the Executive had previously approved the rescheduling of a number of General Fund projects to future years. The approved 2017/18 budget of £26m was revised to £33.6m to take into account slippage from the 2016/17 Capital Programme. The final outturn was £28.317m, an underspend of £5.278 against the revised budget. Details of service area spend and slippage were provided.

The Housing Capital Programme for 2016/17 had an outturn of £32.9m giving an overspend of £1.7m and was primarily due to the acceleration of external fabric improvements from 2018/19 to 2017/18.

#### **Decision**

**The Executive noted:-**

- (1) the 2017/18 outturn position, subject to audit, for both the General Fund Services (£28.3m) and Housing Capital Programmes (£32.9m);**
- (2) the reduced external borrowing requirement for Capital Programme purposes, and**
- (3) the Prudential Indicators.**

#### **EX49. Projected Financial Position 2018/19**

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services which provided an update on the financial position of the Council for 2018/19 and its Reserves. Net expenditure at 31 March 2019 was forecast to be £341.0m which was £5.380m (1.6%) above budget. This was primarily due to an overspend on care packages for children looked after away from home. It was projected that there would be a general fund reserve balance of £8.162m at March 2019. The report also advised of the following deviations from budget:-

- Children's Services – over budget by £3.279m (1.7%)
- Corporate & Housing Services – under budget by £0.129m (0.5%)
- Development Services – on budget
- Social Work Adult Services – over budget by £0.056m (1.1%).

Spending within the Housing Revenue Account of £62.7m was in line with the budget. The reserve balance brought forward at 1 April 2018 was £5.093m and no application of reserves was planned for 2018/19.

### **Decision**

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

- (1) noted the Council's projected year-end financial position for 2018/19;**
- (2) noted the position with respect to reserves, and**
- (3) agreed to instruct Service Directors to take appropriate actions to maintain their costs within the approved budget.**

### **EX50. Decisions Taken Under Delegated Powers**

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services which provided details of two decisions taken under delegated powers.

### **Decision**

**The Executive noted the decisions taken under delegated powers.**