

The background of the slide is a large, light blue watermark of the City of Vancouver's coat of arms. It features a crown at the top with four maple leaves. The shield is divided into four quadrants: top-left shows a city skyline with a diagonal arrow; top-right shows a stag's head with a cross behind its antlers; bottom-left shows a three-masted sailing ship on wavy water; bottom-right shows an eagle with spread wings perched on a branch. A banner at the bottom contains the motto 'A NE FOR A'.

# **Agenda Item 3**

## **Minute**

Draft

**FALKIRK COUNCIL**

**Minute of meeting of the EXECUTIVE held within the Municipal Buildings,  
Falkirk on Tuesday 16 October 2018 at 9.30 a.m.**

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

**Officers:** Karen Algie, Head of HR & Business Transformation  
Danny Cairney, Senior Service Manager Corporate Finance  
Colin Frame, Principal Surveyor (Strategic Projects)  
Arlene Fraser, Committee Services Officer  
Rhona Geisler, Director of Development Services  
Kenny Gillespie, Head of Housing  
Kenneth Lawrie, Chief Executive  
Colin Moodie, Chief Governance Officer  
Robert Naylor, Director of Children's Services  
Bryan Smail, Chief Finance Officer

**Also Attending:** Councillor Robert Spears, Portfolio Holder Culture, Leisure  
& Tourism for item EX77

**EX63. Apologies**

An apology was intimated on behalf of Councillor Nicol.

**EX64. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**EX65. Minute**

**Decision**

**The minute of the meeting of the Executive held on 25 September 2018  
was approved.**

## **EX66. Rolling Action Log**

A rolling action log detailing decisions not yet implemented following the previous meeting on 25 September 2018 was provided.

### **Decision**

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

Councillor Coombes entered the meeting during consideration of the following item.

## **EX67. Fees and Charges**

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services which had been continued from the Council meeting on 19 September 2018 (ref FC44) to the Executive for approval.

The report presented the Corporate Charging and Concessions Policy which sought to introduce a consistent approach to charging and concessions across the Council taking into account the Poverty Strategy following a request by Council at its February meeting (ref FC81).

A draft Policy was set out in Annex 1 within Appendix 1 to the report. This had been developed to take into account best practice and ensure consistency across the Council, while enabling Services the flexibility to manage their approach to meet the needs of their customers.

The Council was about to introduce a new chargeable service within the registration team. The team would provide a passport checking service for EEA and Swiss nationals applying for residence in the UK. It was provided on behalf of the Home Office. The proposed charge was £30 as an estimate of full cost recovery with a concession offered to any applicant in receipt of a means tested benefit.

### **Decision**

**The Executive:-**

- (1) approved the Corporate Charging and Concessions Policy;**
- (2) noted the Policy will apply to all new charges and that the level of existing charges and the eligibility and level of concessions for those charges will be reviewed in line with the Policy as part of the budget process for 2019/20, and**
- (3) agreed the proposed charge and concession for the European Passport Checking Service.**

#### **EX68. Second Nature: A Biodiversity Action Plan for the Falkirk Council Area**

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Development Services which provided the finalised third Biodiversity Action Plan for the Falkirk Council area, the results of the public consultation process and seeking approval of the finalised plan.

The Executive had, at its meeting on 15 May 2018 (ref EX20), approved the draft action plan for consultation. Officers were instructed to carry out a programme of public consultation and prepare a finalised plan for approval.

The report set out the consultation process undertaken and details in appendix 1, the summary of the consultation responses and changes to the draft plan.

The action plan aimed to conserve and enhance the wild plants, animals and habitats of the Falkirk area. It coordinated and focussed the work of numerous local organisations and individuals to help conserve the most important and/or threatened wildlife. Maintenance of an up to date action plan was vital to the Council fulfilling its statutory duty to further the conservation of biodiversity detailed in the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004.

The finalised action plan was provided as Appendix 2 to the report.

#### **Decision**

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

- (1) approved the “Second Nature: A Biodiversity Action Plan for the Falkirk Council Area”, and**
- (2) agreed that officers publish and implement the Action Plan.**

#### **EX69. Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2019/20 – 2023/24**

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services which sought approval of the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2018-2023, prior to submission to the Scottish Government, and agreement to progress actions to support delivery of additional housing projects.

The SHIP's purpose is to set out strategic investment priorities for affordable housing over the next 5 years in order to achieve the outcomes contained in the Local Housing Strategy (LHS).

The Scottish Government issued new draft guidance in July 2018 which contains revised procedures for preparing SHIPs, including the requirement for the document to be produced and submitted annually.

Details of the resources and funding available to deliver affordable housing was set out, together with the list of projects covering the full 5 years of the SHIP. There was a shortfall in funding identified over the next 5 years, but officers would continue to review and manage the SHIP to maximise the amount of available funding from the Scottish Government, in order to deliver the maximum number of locally available affordable properties.

The report also included information in relation to the Council's proposed new build projects and the requirements to acquire these sites.

## **Decision**

### **The Executive:-**

- (1) agreed the SHIP 2019/2020 to 2023/24 (Appendix 1) for submission to the Scottish Government;**
- (2) authorised officers to enter into negotiations to transfer the land at Denny High School, Bainsford Day Centre, former Oakbank Home, Polmont and Main Street, Bonnybridge to the Housing Revenue Account, and**
- (3) noted that officers will adapt the SHIP in line with available resources in order to maximise the supply of affordable housing locally and provide updates to Members of any changes.**

## **EX70. Falkirk Local Development Plan – Supplementary Guidance SG12 – Affordable Housing**

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Development Services which sought approval for consultation on amendments to Supplementary Guidance SG12 Affordable Housing.

Planning authorities may adopt statutory Supplementary Guidance (SG) which forms part of the Development Plan. The SG provides additional detailed guidance on the implementation of policies in the Local Development Plan (LDP).

SG12 relates to the adopted LDP Policy HSG02 on affordable housing, which set out requirements for the provision of affordable housing as part of new private housing development.

Minor updates to SG12 had been identified and, if approved, would provide a clearer view of the types of affordable housing and the approach required to deliver affordable housing on private housing sites. The proposed changes are detailed in Appendix 1.

The report referred to the 6 week consultation exercise which will be carried out, and the necessary requirements and procedures to be undertaken, prior to the finalised SG12 forming part of the Local Development Plan.

## **Decision**

### **The Executive:-**

- (1) approved the draft amendments to SG12 Affordable Housing and authorised officers to undertake consultation on the revised document, and**
- (2) agreed that, following the consultation process, in the event that no comments or only minor comments are received, the Director of Development Services be authorised to submit the finalised draft SG12 to Scottish Ministers for approval otherwise the matter will be reported back to the Executive.**

## **EX71. Council of the Future**

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

The change programme had progressed in its implementation and delivery phase with details being provided on progress of achievements from July 2018 to September 2018.

Progress reports for all Council of the Future projects was detailed in Appendix 2.

Updates on the following projects were set out in the report:

- Smart Working, Smart Travel
- Next Generation Contact Centre
- BMD
- Implementation of the Advice Hub and Spokes – Phase 2
- Living Well Falkirk
- Future Projects for Council of the Future

A number of employee engagement events had been held with an outcome being a commitment to continue to seek best practices in other local authorities. Future sessions would involve 3 identified councils to help develop thinking, share ideas and build on core findings into programme and project plans.

Information was provided on the findings from the review of COTF governance arrangements. The agreed governance framework is in place and directly focusses on the imperative for an increased pace of change and a greater focus on achieving financial savings in the next period and beyond.

Financial savings of c.£5m had been achieved from COTF programmes in 2018/19. Additional financial benefits for the next 5 years had been identified from current and new COTF projects.

## **Decision**

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

- (1) the progress made in the Council of the Future Programme of Change;**
- (2) the imperative for an increased pace of change and a greater focus on achieving financial savings in the next period and beyond, and**
- (3) that future quarterly update reports will be provided.**

## **EX72. Update on Council HQ/Replacement Arts Centre Project**

The Executive considered a joint report by the Chief Executive and Director of Development Services which outlined the work currently being progressed and indicative timescales for the next steps to progress with a HQ/Arts Centre replacement project in the town centre.

At its meeting on 14 August 2018 (ref EX39), the Executive had agreed to progress proposals for delivery of the replacement HQ/Arts Centre.

The report detailed the progress to date, the steps intended to take the project forward to enable the Council to identify a means of delivering the project in partnership with developers and other community planning partners.

In order to develop the shared vision and action plan, a town centre working group workshop took place on 3 October 2018, involving representatives from Falkirk BID, local retailers, landowners and other town centre stakeholders. Results of the workshop would be further considered at the next meeting of the town centre working group in November.

The report set out the progress in the preparation of the business case, which would be used as the basis for the procurement exercise, and details of the updated outline specifications for the replacement HQ project.

It was agreed that the Director of Development Services would meet with the Council's representatives on the Falkirk Town Centre Working Group prior to each meeting.

## **Decision**

### **The Executive:-**

- (1) noted the progress since the last meeting in August;**
- (2) agreed the outline specification for the HQ/Arts Centre including adoption of a revised space standard for the facility of 0.6 desks per FTE;**
- (3) agreed to initiate the procurement process, including the allocation of £300k funding from the Strategic Property Review capital funds, in order to finalise the HQ/Arts Centre requirements and provide specialist procurement advice to the Council for selection of a preferred project, and**
- (4) agreed that a further report be brought back with the outcome of the initial stages of the procurement exercise.**

### **EX73. Falkirk Investment Zone Update**

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Development Services which provided an update on the work to introduce an Investment Zone initiative for the Falkirk area, being considered by the Scottish and UK governments; and the outputs of the work so far, including details of the submission and feedback on the Outline Business Case (OBC), and the timeline and process for the next stages of the bid for this initiative.

The Executive had, at its meeting on 21 February 2017 (ref EX112), agreed that an outline bid submission for an Investment Zone initiative for Falkirk be made to UK and Scottish Governments.

A Steering Group was formed to oversee the Investment Zone OBC preparation, with representatives of Falkirk Council, Scottish Enterprise, Scottish Futures Trust, Forth Valley College and Scottish Canals. A consultancy team was commissioned to prepare the OBC, and prior to the application being submitted, engagement with the wider business community had taken place.

The bid submitted sought c.£207m of funding to deliver a proposed package of works, which would promote economic opportunities in the area. A summary of the submission was attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

The report provided information on the further engagement and work required with partners and wider stakeholders, to enable work to proceed to the next stage to complete the scope of the full project, including firming up the package for costing and delivery.

Financial contributions had been sought from organisations within the Falkirk Economic Partnership to conclude the next stage of work on the initiative. A proposed contribution of £50k from the Development Services budget be made by the Council towards this work.

## **Decision**

### **The Executive:-**

- (1) noted the progress of work on the Investment Zone initiative;**
- (2) agreed to commit additional funding of £50k, as set out in para 6.3 towards completion of an agreement for delivery of the Investment Zone, and**
- (3) agreed that the contract awarded to the appointed consultants, Grant Thornton, be extended to enable completion of this work, including examination of anticipated contributions from the Council over the life of the initiative.**

## **EX74. 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; and detailed progress with meeting the budgeted financial targets.

In August, the Executive noted the projected overspend in net expenditure of £5.380m however, this variation was partially due to expenditure funded from reserves. The expenditure for this report, had been offset by contributions from reserves, as the overall effect was to reduce the previously reported overspend to £3.197m. The impact on the General Fund position remains the same as that reported in August.

Net expenditure at 31 March 2019 was now forecast to be £345.2m which was £1,996m (0.6%) above the resources available. This was an improvement of £1,231m from the restated August overspend of £3.197m and, was primarily due to a reduction in the projected overspend within Children's Services.

The report set out the reasons for the significant deviations from budget by each service.

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.**

#### **EX75. Arnotdale House, Dollar Park, Falkirk**

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Development Services which provided an update on the project to refurbish Arnotdale House, Dollar Park, Falkirk being undertaken in partnership with Cyrenians and seeking approval for lease terms for the property.

The property had been vacant for some time and in 2014, the external fabric of the property was refurbished. Additional funding of £1.125m had been allocated from the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund to complete phase 2 works. The property is held on the Falkirk Common Good account.

Cyrenians is a registered charity and provide a wide range of support and services to families in the local area.

The report set out the key outputs of the refurbishment project and proposed terms for the lease to Cyrenians. The goals and objectives of the proposed project had been assessed with the findings detailed in the report.

## **Decision**

### **The Executive:-**

- (1) noted the progress on the refurbishment works at Arnotdale House, and**
- (2) agreed to lease Arnotdale House to Cyrenians at a reduced rent on full repairing and insuring terms as detailed on paragraph 4.5 of the report.**

#### **EX76. Land Surplus to Requirements – Beech Lee, Old Polmont and 362-370 Main Street, Stenhousemuir**

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Development Services seeking approval for the two areas of land, detailed in the report, to be declared surplus to operational requirements for disposal.

The Council's Corporate Asset Management Strategy includes objectives to secure operational efficiencies through asset realisation, including the disposal of property and land which is surplus to operational requirements.

There are no operational requirements to retain the two sites detailed in the report and their disposal would generate capital receipts to support the Council's General Services Capital Programme.

### **Decision**

**The Executive agreed to declare the following sites surplus to requirements and authorised the Director of Development Services to conclude the transactions, on the terms set out in the report:-**

- 1. land at Beech Lee, Grange Road, Old Polmont – disposal by negotiated agreement**
- 2. land at 362-370 Main Street, Stenhousemuir – disposal on the open market.**

### **EX77. Synthetic Sports Pitches**

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services which provided an update on the arrangements to create two synthetic sports pitches at Newtown Park, Bo'ness and Westfield Park, Denny.

The Executive had agreed on 29 November 2016 (ref EX90) that the Council would become joint applicants with the 2 clubs for **sportscotland** funding of £250,000 for each pitch. Funding bids were submitted to **sportscotland** in August 2017 and, subsequently, approved with both applications being awarded £250,000 in January 2018.

On conclusion of the necessary agreements, work on the Westfield Park site commenced in June with the new synthetic pitch being completed in September, and within the funding available.

The pitch at Newtown Park will be delayed until 2019, as the necessary site investigations revealed a mine shaft in the vicinity, which will require remedial work to be undertaken, prior to the commencement of the pitch. The cost of the pitch and additional remedial works is still within the available funding.

Camelon Juniors had also expressed an interest in developing a 3G surface, however, the Council has, at this time, no approved funding for any further development of 3G pitches. Assistance and support in relation to obtaining external funding would be provided to the club.

## **Decision**

### **The Executive:-**

- (1) noted the position on the synthetic pitches at Newtown Park and Westfield Park and that any significant changes or issues will be reported through the Capital Programme; and**
- (2) agreed, that further to the interest of Camelon Juniors in developing a synthetic pitch, appropriate advice and support will be provided in relation to the sourcing of external funding.**

## **EX78. Tax Incremental Finance Initiative Update Report**

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Development Services which provided an update on the Falkirk Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) initiative including revisions to the infrastructure programme with proposals for an elevated cycle/pedestrian bridge structure at the A9/A904 Westfield roundabout, and further amendments to lease arrangements at Falkirk Stadium.

Since the TIF started 5 years ago, the Council had delivered £6m of infrastructure work, with the remainder required to be delivered over the next 6 years.

A revised implementation schedule for TIF projects was attached as Appendix 1 to the report, which set out changes to delivery timescales to the Westfield roundabout project, the provision of the proposed Westfield Ring and associated site works.

The projects are required to allow an increase in road capacity which is essential to support longer term development and improve vehicular access/movement across the Gateway, Helix Park, the Kelpies, Falkirk Stadium, Forth Valley College and access to Falkirk town centre; as well as creating capacity to allow for clear pedestrian access across the four sites.

Information was provided on the revised ground lease at the Falkirk Community Stadium. The District Valuer had valued the proposed lease variation and confirmed that the Council will continue to achieve best value from this transaction.

## **Decision**

### **The Executive:-**

- (1) noted the update on progress with the Falkirk TIF Initiative;**
- (2) agreed the revised implementation schedule for TIF projects as outlined in Appendix 1, including provision of an elevated**

**cycle/pedestrian bridge structure at the A9/A904 Westfield roundabout, and**

- (3) agreed to revise the ground lease with Falkirk Football Club at the Falkirk Community Stadium as outlined in paragraph 4.4 of the report.**

**EX79. Exclusion of Public**

The Executive agreed in terms of section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to 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 Paragraphs 2&6 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the said Act.

**EX80. Redevelopment Haugh Gardens, Bainsford**

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services to agree proposals for the redevelopment of Haugh Gardens, Bainsford.

This item is exempt from publication on the grounds that it would involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 2 & 6 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.