

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 its hind legs. Above the shield is a crown with four maple leaves. 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 remotely on Tuesday 13 April 2021 at 10.00 a.m.

Councillors: David Alexander
Robert Bissett
Gary Bouse
Joan Coombes
Paul Garner
Nigel Harris
Gordon Hughes
James Kerr
Cecil Meiklejohn (Convener)
Lynn Munro
Alan Nimmo
Pat Reid

Officers: Sophie Dick, Graduate Trainee (Governance)
Douglas Duff, Acting Director of Development Services
Jack Frawley, Team Leader – Committee Services
Kenneth Lawrie, Chief Executive
Colin Moodie, Chief Governance Officer
Pete Reid, Growth & Investment Manager
Stuart Ritchie, Director of Corporate & Housing Services
Bryan Smail, Chief Finance Officer
Danny Thallon, Environment Co-ordinator

In accordance with section 43 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 the Convener had directed that the meeting would be conducted by video conference to allow remote attendance by elected members.

In accordance with section 50A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 the public were excluded from this meeting as it was likely that, if members of the public were present, there would be a real and substantial risk to public health due to infection or contamination with coronavirus.

EX1. Minute Silence – HRH the Duke of Edinburgh

The Executive observed a minute silence in memory of His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh. Following the silence each of the Group Leaders, Councillors Meiklejohn, Bissett and Kerr, spoke in tribute.

EX2. Apologies

There were no apologies.

EX3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations.

EX4. Minute

Minute of Meeting of the Executive held on 9 March 2021.

Decision

The minute of the meeting of the Executive held on 9 March 2021 was approved.

EX5. Rolling Action Log

A rolling action log detailing decisions not yet implemented following the previous meeting on 9 March 2021 was provided.

Decision

The Executive noted the rolling action log.

EX6. Economic Recovery Plan Action Plan – Update Report

The Executive considered a report by the Acting Director of Development Services which provided an update in relation to support for the area's economy delivered during 2020/21 and set out proposed support to be delivered in 2021/22 as part of delivery of the Council's three year Covid-19 Economic Recovery Plan.

The Covid-19 pandemic continued to have a direct impact on businesses in all sectors and the wider workforce of the Falkirk area. Measures had been delivered since November 2020 to assist in the response. However some measures had been impacted by the national lockdown or the provision of additional business support from government. These funds continued to be required and were committed for delivery in 2021-22. The interventions set out in the report for 2021-22 proposed continued support for the local business community, workforces and town centres and would help sustain recovery activity over the 3 years of the plan. By accessing additional external funding support from UK and Scottish Governments, it was anticipated that further impact could be achieved towards the area's

economic recovery. These would also help lay foundations for a longer term recovery reflecting the Council's Investment Zone and net zero aspirations.

The report provided information on:-

- Delivery of Business Support Schemes
- Economic Recovery Measures – funding support during 2020/21
- The Revenue Allocation for 2020/21
- Financial Support for Business
- Town Centre Fund Additional Capital Allocation
- Proposed Economic Recovery Revenue Allocation for 2021/22
- National & Forth Valley Regional Recovery Measures

The Executive adjourned at 10.50am and reconvened at 11.05am with all members present as per the sederunt.

Following discussion, the Acting Director of Development Services gave an undertaking to provide a report to a future meeting regarding the stopping up order in relation to Bo'ness Road.

Decision

The Executive:-

- (1) noted the progress on the Covid-19 Economic Recovery Plan;**
- (2) agreed the proposed allocation of funds for economic recovery purposes as set out in section 4 of the report;**
- (3) noted the work being undertaken at a Forth Valley regional partnership level including proposals for a funding bid to be submitted to the Scottish Government's Bus Partnership Fund, as set out in section 4.9 of the report, and**
- (4) agreed to request a report on the approach to the additional funds being made available to the Falkirk area under the 'Levelling Up Fund' and the 'Community Renewal Fund' to a future meeting.**

EX7. Edinburgh Declaration on Biodiversity

The Executive considered a report by the Acting Director of Development Services which provided information on the Edinburgh Declaration on Biodiversity. Local authorities were invited to sign the Edinburgh Declaration prior to its presentation to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity 15 (COP15). Having considered the Council's environmental objectives, the Executive was asked to approve signing of the Edinburgh Declaration.

The Edinburgh Declaration was a high-level commitment on the role of subnational and local governments. The declaration was a call on national governments to adopt an ambitious agreement at COP15 to halt biodiversity loss, with greater inclusion of subnational governments, cities, and local authorities. Subnational governments, cities, and local authorities from across the globe were encouraged to sign the Edinburgh Declaration. The Declaration was open for signatories until May 2021 when COP15 was scheduled to be held.

Current signatories included the governments/assemblies of Scotland, Wales and Quebec, regional and local governments from 11 different countries including Japan, Mexico, Sweden, Uganda and Scotland. The current Scottish local authority signatories were: Aberdeenshire Council, South Ayrshire Council, Stirling Council and Glasgow City Council. It was understood that several other Scottish Local Authorities were working towards signing the declaration. COSLA had indicated that they planned to contact all Local Authorities to encourage them to sign the declaration and to seek approval for COSLA itself to become a signatory.

Decision

The Executive approved the signing of the Edinburgh Declaration by the Leader of the Council.

EX8. Treasury Management Strategy

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services which set out the framework for Treasury Management reporting over the course of a financial year. The framework required a Treasury Management Strategy Report, an Interim Review Report and an Annual Review Report. The report presented the Treasury Management Strategy Report for 2021/22. The Code of Practice required that, following consideration by the Executive, the report was referred to Council for approval. The Treasury Management Strategy Report was a forward looking report which included information on:-

- Economic Outlook
- Capital plans
- The Loans Fund
- A borrowing strategy for 2021/22
- An investment strategy for 2021/22

The key messages from the report were that whilst there was optimism in improvements to the economy, that was predicated on the rapid rollout of the vaccination programme and the effectiveness of the vaccine to manage the Covid-19 pandemic. It was considered likely that interest rates would remain low for the next 2 to 3 years. However, there was the potential for volatility in rates, not least due to the pandemic. The approved Capital Strategy and capital programmes set out an ambitious level of investment by Falkirk

Council over the next five years - £692m in total. It was important to ensure that Treasury Management arrangements were robust in helping to support the level of investment through good management of cashflows and effective decision making on borrowing. The Council's Treasury Management Advisors, Link Asset Services, would be a key part of that work.

Decision

The Executive agreed to refer the report to Council for consideration and recommended that Council:-

- (1) adopts the Borrowing Strategy for 2021/22 as set out in section 7 of the report;**
- (2) approves the Treasury Indicators as set out in sections 7 and 8 of the report, and**
- (3) adopts the Investment Strategy for 2021/22 and approves the list of "Permitted Investments" as set out in section 8 of the report.**

Councillor Kerr left the meeting during consideration of the previous item.