

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 on Tuesday 22 February 2022 at 10.00 a.m.

Councillors: Robert Bissett
Gary Bouse
Paul Garner
Nigel Harris
Gordon Hughes
James Kerr
Cecil Meiklejohn (Convener)
Lynn Munro
Alan Nimmo

Officers: Karen Algie, Head of People, Technology and Transformation
Malcolm Bennie, Director of Place Services
Sally Buchanan, Senior Fairer Falkirk Co-ordinator
Carl Bullough, Head of Environmental Services
Sophie Dick, Democratic Services Graduate
Jack Frawley, Team Leader – Committee Services
Kenny Gillespie, Head of Housing & Communities
Iain Henderson, Legal Services Manager
Kenneth Lawrie, Chief Executive
Colin Moodie, Chief Governance Officer
Mari-Claire Morgan, Energy & Climate Change Co-ordinator
Robert Naylor, Director of Children's Services
Dot Reid, Roads & Grounds Manager
Bryan Smail, Chief Finance Officer

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.

EX110. Apologies

Apologies were intimated on behalf of Councillors Alexander and Coombes.

EX111. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations.

EX112. Minutes

Decision

The minute of the meeting of the Executive held on 18 January 2022 and the minute of the special meeting of the Executive held on 8 February 2022 were approved.

EX113. Rolling Action Log

A rolling action log detailing decisions not yet implemented following the previous meeting on 8 January 2022 was provided. Item 584 - Motion: Falkirk Families Face Financial Crisis was the subject of a report on the agenda and accordingly fell from the rolling action log.

Decision

The Executive noted the rolling action log.

EX114. Poverty in Falkirk

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services which provided information on the potential impact of the recent changes to Universal Credit. The Executive had requested the report at its meeting of 30 November 2021. At that meeting the Executive agreed that the report would also be presented to the Education, Children and Young People Executive and to Council. In light of the full information presented in the report the Executive was asked to agree that it was not necessary to further submit the report.

Changes to Universal Credit would impact an estimated 12,763 households in the Falkirk Council area. Roughly one third would benefit from the changes in taper rate. The overall impact to the Falkirk Council area would be a reduction in household income of around £8.8m. Latest figures from 2019/20 showed that after housing costs, 6,980 children in the Falkirk area were living in poverty.

As the number of people experiencing poverty and the level of hardship for those already experiencing poverty increased, there would be increased demand for support services. There was already an increase in enquiries about fuel costs.

In the last three months, compared to the same period in 2020, homeless presentations increased by 5.5% and demand for Housing Advice increased by 13.9%. There was a lack of affordable accommodation in the area, as the cost of most private rented accommodation was greater than the Local Housing Allowance.

Addressing poverty and inequalities was a priority in Falkirk Council's corporate plan which aimed to make sure everyone had an equal chance to be healthier, happier, safer and build sustainable communities. Recent plans considered the global pandemic, its ongoing effect on the most vulnerable families in Falkirk and the expectation that the number of people living in poverty would continue to increase.

Work on the 2022 Falkirk Child Poverty Action Plan was underway. Underpinning the year 4 plan was the collection and analysis of local data on the impact that Covid-19 had had on priority groups affected by poverty and the inclusion of lived experience into our work. By March 2023, children and young people in Falkirk would be empowered participants at the heart of the democratic decision-making processes of Falkirk Council, partners and third sector organisations. This was in line with the UNCRC incorporation into Scots Law.

The Executive:-

- (1) noted the update on the likely impact of the changes and the work underway to tackle poverty in Falkirk, and**
- (2) agreed that consideration of the report at this meeting was sufficient to satisfy the reporting requirement agreed by the Executive.**

EX115. Climate Emergency Update

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Place Services which provided an update on the work in relation to the Climate Emergency. The report included updates on the following key areas:-

- Carbon Budgeting
- Climate Emergency Action Plan 2022-2030
- Progress toward Net Zero Targets
- Falkirk Council LCLIP (Local Climate Impact Assessment)
- Forth Valley Climate Forest

The Carbon Budget concept would allocate an allowance of tonnes Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (tCO₂e) emissions annually for each Service area. Services would then be required to keep within their allocated Carbon Budget over the financial year allowing the Council to better manage progress towards meeting its emission reduction targets. Carbon

budgeting was due to begin in 2022/23. The next steps were to embed carbon budgeting and develop the carbon budgeting tool for Services.

The Climate Emergency Action Plan outlined Council priorities/key actions to tackle climate change, including:-

- A review of the vehicle replacement programme to move towards a more sustainable fleet
- Improving energy efficiency in residential housing
- Reducing waste to landfill

The Action Plan was supported by the Council's Project Register and illustrated the actions/projects that the Council could implement to realise the reduction in carbon emissions required to meet the Net Zero Targets.

In 2020 the Energy and Climate Change Team updated and developed a new Local Climate Impact Profile (LCLIP). The LCLIP was a snapshot in time which assessed the anticipated weather patterns and how they may adversely affect service delivery.

The Woodland Trust had launched an Emergency Tree Fund, for applications of between £50,000 to £300,000, to help local authorities address the climate emergency, overcome potential barriers, stimulate activity in tree planting, and provide exemplars of innovation and inspiration that could be applied. The Forth Climate Forest would be a ten-year project to harness current urgency and enthusiasm for tree planting to build momentum across communities and regions. The Forth Climate Forest had 3 main objectives:-

- Canopy
- Connectivity
- Carbon.

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

- (1) notes the ongoing work across the Council linked to Carbon Budgeting;
- (2) agrees the Climate Emergency Action Plan 2022-2030;
- (3) notes the work outlined in the Climate Change Project Register;
- (4) notes the new Falkirk Council Local Climate Impact Assessment, and
- (5) agrees to participate in the Forth Valley Climate Forest project.

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

- (6) recognise the importance of energy management in tackling the climate emergency;
- (7) agree to establish an Energy Management Monitoring Group;
- (8) request that the Director of Place Services presents a report to the next meeting setting out details of the Group's Terms of Reference and proposals for categories of Membership. Membership should be wide and include front line staff;
- (9) agree to set energy management targets for each premises for Year One (2022) as:-
 - 3% Electricity
 - 3% Gas
- (10) request that the Group presents an action plan to a future meeting for information which will then be followed by quarterly and an annual update in the Information Bulletin;
- (11) agree that financial savings achieved through energy management work will be reinvested in energy efficiency measures, and
- (12) request that the Corporate Plan is updated to reflect that energy management is an important part of the Council's approach to tackling climate change.

The Executive adjourned at 10.45am and reconvened at 11am with all members present as per the sederunt.

Councillor Garner, with the consent of Councillor Meiklejohn as his seconder, agreed to accept the terms of the amendment into the motion subject to an alteration to clause (9) to set the targets at 5% for electricity and gas. Councillor Bissett confirmed that he was content with this change.

Decision

The Executive:-

- (1) noted the ongoing work across the Council linked to Carbon Budgeting;**
- (2) agreed the Climate Emergency Action Plan 2022-2030;**
- (3) noted the work outlined in the Climate Change Project Register;**

- (4) noted the new Falkirk Council Local Climate Impact Assessment;**
- (5) agreed to participate in the Forth Valley Climate Forest project;**
- (6) recognised the importance of energy management in tackling the climate emergency;**
- (7) agreed to establish an Energy Management Monitoring Group;**
- (8) requested that the Director of Place Services present a report to the next meeting setting out details of the Group's Terms of Reference and proposals for categories of Membership. Membership should be wide and include front line staff;**
- (9) agreed to set energy management targets for each premises for Year One (2022) as:-**
 - 5% Electricity**
 - 5% Gas**
- (10) requested that the Group presented an action plan to a future meeting for information which would then be followed by quarterly and an annual update in the Information Bulletin;**
- (11) agreed that financial savings achieved through energy management work would be reinvested in energy efficiency measures, and**
- (12) requested that the Corporate Plan was updated to reflect that energy management was an important part of the Council's approach to tackling climate change.**

EX116. Residual Waste Contract Strategy

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Place Services which set out the proposed contract strategy for the procurement of a new residual waste contract in line with Council Contract Standing Order 6.2(ii) relative to major contracts.

Falkirk Council was the waste collection authority and the waste disposal authority under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and as such required to have in place proper arrangements including for the disposal of residual waste. Residual waste was the waste that was left after segregation processes to take out for example recyclable materials. The residual waste was approximately 38,000 - 40,000 tonnes per annum.

Falkirk Council was collaborating with Perth and Kinross, Stirling and Clackmannanshire Councils in the development of contract strategies and in the procurement process. This was supported by Scottish Government via Zero Waste Scotland who had commissioned specialist technical support and advice.

The technical advice and soft market testing supported a relatively long term contract of 10 years with the option for up to a further 5 years. The contract would include detailed contract change provisions to account for market or regulatory changes during the period. The estimated annual contract value was estimated at £5m.

Residual waste would be presented to the market in two Lots. Lot 1 being black bag waste – kerbside collections and Lot 2 being bulky waste e.g. carpets, mattresses. Separate Lots had resulted as not all treatment solutions could accommodate bulky waste items. As the Council did not own/operate a Waste Transfer facility, a requirement was to enable collected waste to be delivered immediately post collection, by Council vehicles, to the treatment facility.

Tender documentation and tender evaluation criteria were being finalised with a weighting based on price 70% and quality 30% being proposed. The quality criteria and weightings proposed were:-

- Deliverability of solution – facility plan and readiness to divert waste from landfill (30%)
- Landfill Diversion and Environmental Performance(15%)
- Waste reception and vehicle interface (10%)
- Monitoring and reporting of contract waste (10%)
- Contingency arrangements (10%)
- Environmental management and compliance (5%)
- Carbon management (10%)
- Fair Work First and Community Benefits (10%).

Decision

The Executive:-

- (1) approved the contract strategy for the procurement of a residual waste treatment solution as outlined in section 4 of the report with an initial term of 10 years and an option to extend for up to a further 5 years, and**
- (2) delegated to the Director of Place Services the scope to make appropriate changes to the contract strategy as circumstances develop, and where the changes were considered material, to do so in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Leaders of the main Opposition Groups.**

EX117. Projected Financial Position 2021/22

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services which presented an update on the financial position of the Council for 2021/22.

Net expenditure at 31 March 2022 was forecast to be £389m which was £4.7m (1.2%) below the resources available. Reduced costs within Place Services, a lower service payment to Falkirk Community Trust and increased council tax were the main factors contributing to the improved position.

The SJC pay award had been agreed and implemented in the January payroll. This was included in the projections and had been covered from existing resources. An area of uncertainty was the teachers' pay award which was still to be determined.

The reasons for significant overall deviations from budget were described for each Service:-

- Children's Services (under budget by £0.195m; 0.1%)
- Place Services (on budget)
- Corporate & Housing Services (under budget by £0.234m; 0.7%)
- Integration Joint Board (On budget)
- Falkirk Community Trust (Under budget by £1.322m, 9.6%)
- Capital Charges (Under budget by £9.100m 5.7%)
- General Revenue Grant (Under budget by £1.157m, 0.5%)
- Council Tax (Under budget by £0.200m, 0.3%)
- Fiscal Flexibilities (Over budget by £7m, 100%)

The General Fund Reserve showed a projected balance of £12.514m as at March 2022. This was an increase of c£1.9m from the October position and c£4.7m better than originally planned.

Overall Housing Revenue Account spending was projected to be on budget and included the absorption of the anticipated BMD deficit of £2m. This followed agreement between COSLA and Audit Scotland that even if works were not carried out, the relevant costs (primarily employee costs and overheads) could still be charged to the HRA. The figure for the HRA incorporated a payment of £1.414m to the IJB for in scope services e.g. garden aid and adaptation expenditure.

Decision

The Executive:-

- (1) noted the Council's projected year-end financial position for 2021/22;**
- (2) noted the position with respect to Reserves;**

- (3) noted the progress on the achievement of approved savings, and**
- (4) instructed Service Directors to continue to take appropriate actions to maintain their costs within the approved budget.**