

MORAY COUNCIL

Minute of Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee

Tuesday, 02 October 2018

Council Chambers, Council Office, High Street, Elgin, IV30 1BX

PRESENT

Councillor George Alexander, Councillor Frank Brown, Councillor John Cowe, Councillor Lorna Creswell, Councillor John Divers, Councillor Ryan Edwards, Councillor Louise Laing, Councillor Graham Leadbitter, Councillor Marc Macrae, Councillor Aaron McLean, Councillor Shona Morrison, Councillor Sonya Warren

APOLOGIES

Councillor Tim Eagle

IN ATTENDANCE

The Corporate Director (Corporate Services), the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, the Head of Financial Services, the Taxation Manager, the Estates Manager and the Legal and Democratic Services Manager as Clerk to the Meeting.

1 Declaration of Group Decisions and Members Interests *

In terms of Standing Order 20 and the Councillors' Code of Conduct, Councillor Creswell declared an interest in Agenda Item 8 'Application for Non-Domestic Rates Relief' as she was a Board member of the Forres Area Community Trust and would not take part in the discussion. The Meeting noted that there were no other declarations from Group Leaders or Spokespersons in regard to any prior decisions taken on how Members will vote on any item on the agenda or any declarations of Member's interests in respect of any item on the agenda.

2 Resolution

The meeting resolved that in terms of Section 50A (4) and (5) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, the public and media representatives be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the item of business appearing at the relevant paragraph of this minute as specified below, so as to avoid disclosure of exempt information of the class described in the appropriate paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

Paragraph No. of Minute

Paragraph No. of Schedule 7A

10

6 and 9

3 Written Questions

The Meeting noted that no written questions had been submitted.

4 Charging for Services

A report was submitted by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) asking the Committee to agree the default inflation increase for fees and charges for Council services for 109/20 and to reaffirms the current policy of permitting circus lets only if the circus concerned is a member of the Association of Circus Proprietors.

Prior to consideration the Chairman asked the Committee to note the addition of a further recommendation relating to the removal of any charges to the burial of under 18 year olds as recently agreed between COSLA and the Scottish Government. He stated that Moray does not charge for the burial of under 18 year olds and the effect of the recommendation would be to waive charges for the purchase of a lair with exclusive right of burial and headstone permit. He further advised that there will be funding from the Scottish Government to support this.

Following consideration the Committee agreed:

- i. the default inflation increase for charges for Council services for 2019/20 is 3%;
- ii. to request that Moray Integration Joint Board (MIJB) recommend charges for services delivered under the aegis of MIJB;
- iii. to remove any charges relating to the burial of under 18s as agreed between COSLA and the Scottish Government to be implemented by 12 October 2018, and
- iv. to reaffirm the current policy of permitting circus lets only if the circus concerned is a member of the Association of Circus Proprietors.

5 Treasury Management Prudential Indicators 2017-18

A report was submitted by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) providing the Committee with the annual outturn report on Treasury Management and details of the Council's Prudential Indicators for Treasury Management and Capital Investment for the year ended 31 March 2018.

Following consideration the Committee agreed the Treasury Management Performance as set out in Section 4 of this report and the Council's Treasury Management and Capital Investment Prudential Indicators for 2017/18 as set out in the APPENDIX attached to the report.

6 Community Asset Transfer - Grant Lodge

Councillor Warren joined the meeting during discussion of this item.

A report by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) provided an update on

progress with the Community Asset Transfer interest in Grant Lodge, Cooper Park, Elgin.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to note that :

- i. Grant Lodge Trust's potential asset transfer request for Grant Lodge is now being supported by tsiMoray through the provision of a dedicated project officer for a period of six months;
- ii. proposals for a Heritage Visitor Attraction based in Grant Lodge are being progressed in parallel with the potential asset transfer request from Grant Lodge Trust, and
- iii. a report on progress will be brought to Moray Council before the end of the current financial year once the potential availability of funding is known.

7 Application For Discretionary Non-Domestic Rates Remission

A report was submitted by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) asking the Committee to consider an application from Forres Area Community Trust for a discretionary award of Non-Domestic Rates relief for its premises. The report also asked the Committee to consider making a policy decision which may be used in the disposal of any future application for discretionary award of Non-Domestic Rates relief by a similar group which has taken responsibility via community asset transfer for a hall within their community.

Following discussion the Committee agreed:

- i. to grant the application, on its individual merits, from Forres Area Community Trust for an award of some discretionary Non-Domestic Rates relief for its premises at Town Hall, High Street, Forres up to a maximum of twenty per cent of the rates bill, and
- ii. that this is a policy decision which may be used in the disposal of any future application for a discretionary award of Non-Domestic Rates relief by a similar group which has taken responsibility via community asset transfer for a hall within their community.

8 Question Time

No questions were raised.

9 Keith Institute Sale Report [Paras 6 & 9]

A report was submitted by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) asking the Committee to consider an offer received for the sale of the Keith Institute.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- i. note the extensive and protracted efforts that Officer had previously made without success to find a community use for the Keith Institute;
- ii. note the significant level of investment that the intended purchaser plans for the building and the wider benefits that this will bring to the centre of Keith
- iii. approve the main terms of sale as set out in Section 7 of the report; and
- iv. refer the matter to the Legal Services Manager (Property and Contracts) to conclude the transaction.