

MORAY COUNCIL

Minute of Meeting of the Moray Council

Wednesday, 23 August 2023

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

PRESENT

Councillor Peter Bloomfield, Councillor Neil Cameron, Councillor Tracy Colyer, Councillor Theresa Coull, Councillor John Cowe, Councillor John Divers, Councillor Amber Dunbar, Councillor Jérémie Fernandes, Councillor Donald Gatt, Councillor David Gordon, Councillor Juli Harris, Councillor Sandy Keith, Councillor Scott Lawrence, Councillor Graham Leadbitter, Councillor Marc Macrae, Councillor Paul McBain, Councillor Neil McLennan, Councillor Shona Morrison, Councillor Bridget Mustard, Councillor Kathleen Robertson, Councillor Derek Ross, Councillor John Stuart, Councillor Draeyk Van Der Horn, Councillor Sonya Warren, Councillor Ben Williams

APOLOGIES

Councillor James Allan

IN ATTENDANCE

Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance), Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development), Head of Governance Strategy and Performance, Head of Economic Growth and Development, Chief Financial Officer, Gary Templeton, Principal Planning Officer, Principal Accountant, Interim Strategy and Planning Lead and the Democratic Services Manager.

1. Chair

The meeting was chaired by Councillor Kathleen Robertson.

2. Best Wishes

The Council joined the Chair in wishing Councillor Allan a speedy recovery following his recent stay in hospital.

3. Declaration of Group Decisions and Members Interests

In terms of Standing Orders 21 and 23 and the Councillors' Code of conduct, there were no 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.

4. 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 for Item 11 of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information of the class

Para number of the minute	Para Number of Schedule 7a
13	Para 9 Information on terms proposed or to be proposed by or to the Authority

5. Minutes of meeting of 28 June 2023

The minute of the meeting of the Moray Council dated 28 June 2023 was submitted and approved subject to the minute being updated to reflect that Councillor Keith had declared an interest in item 5 on the agenda - Notice of Motion - Save our Surgeries and removed himself from the meeting.

6. Written Questions

The meeting noted the following written question submitted by Councillor Leadbitter and the Council's response thereto:

Scotland's Public Sector Heat Decarbonisation Fund

To ask what plans the Council has to apply for 80% grant funding from the £20m Scotland's Public Sector Heat Decarbonisation Fund recently announced by the Scottish Government and what projects will be considered?

Link to further information: <https://www.gov.scot/news/new-grant-funding-to-decarbonise-public-sector-buildings/#:~:text=Additional%20support%20for%20net%20zero,external%20organisations%20decarbonise%20their%20buildings.>

RESPONSE

Scotland's Public Sector Heat Decarbonisation Fund will replace the Scottish Energy Efficiency Loan Scheme (Salix loans), effectively moving from loans to direct grant awards. The Council has previously received loans from the Salix fund for LED improvements.

Work is currently being undertaken to develop a business case for decarbonising the heating of 10 corporate assets with the assistance of Mott Macdonald via the Non Domestic Energy Efficiency Framework. The intention is to have a proposal presented to the next Asset Management Working Group outlining potential options for these assets and including the option to pursue grant funding via the Public Sector Heat Decarbonisation Fund. A further update on this will be provided either as a stand alone report or incorporated into the annual energy report to Economic Development and Infrastructure Services Committee in November.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Leadbitter sought clarification on whether it would be achievable for the Council to apply for funding given that the fund is only open for a short period of time and may fall outwith relevant Committee meetings to seek approval.

In response, the Head of Economic Growth and Development confirmed that it would fall under one of the actions in the Climate Change Action Plan and delegated authority is already given to apply for grants for this type of work. He further added that the Business Cases need to be robust and follow a sensible route of investment for the Council and decarbonisation.

7. Moray Integration Joint Board Summary

The meeting had before it a report by the Chief Officer, Health and Social Care Moray to inform the Council of the latest approved minutes of the meetings of the Moray Integration Joint Board.

Following consideration the Council unanimously agreed to approve the report.

8. Corporate Plan Review Progress

The meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) seeking Council approval for draft high level priorities for the Council Corporate Plan for 2024 - 29 and to proceed with engagement with the community and Council workforce alongside financial planning engagement activity.

Councillor Morrison highlighted that there was no direct reference to the gender pay gap within the community in the plan. In response the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) advised that the Corporate Plan had a section relating to Inequalities and Incomes with individual Service Plans aligning to the priority.

Councillor Morrison confirmed that she would like to have the gender pay gap highlighted specifically. The Chair confirmed that she would be happy to have a discussion with Councillor Morrison outwith the meeting.

Councillor Van Der Horn suggested alternative wording in relation to Climate Change. The Chair confirmed that she would be happy to discuss alternative wording with Councillor Van Der Horn following the meeting.

In response, the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) suggested that if members were happy, Council could delegate to the Chair and Chief Executive through discussion with other members agreed headings for the Corporate Plan.

Following consideration the Council unanimously agreed:

- i) to note the progress made on developing the 2024-29 Corporate Plan; and
- ii) to note the Moray context document (Appendix 2) that provides background, data and context to inform corporate planning;
- iii) the Corporate Plan draft Vision and draft Priorities as set out in Appendix 1 for consultation and engagement;
- iv) that community and workforce engagement takes place on the draft priorities and future direction alongside financial planning engagement activity;

- v) to note a further report will be submitted to Council to consider the outcome of this engagement and to finalise the Corporate Plan and the actions and measures to ensure its delivery; and
- vi) to delegate to the Chair and Chief Executive, through discussion with other members, agreed headings for the Corporate Plan.

9. Draft Strategic Partnership Agreement with Public Health Scotland

The meeting had before it, a report by the Chief Executive seeking Council approval for the signing of the Strategic Partnership Agreement between Public Health Scotland (PHS) and Moray Council, as one of nine organisations comprising the North East Population Health Alliance (NEPHA).

The Chair proposed an additional recommendation to the report whereby the Agreement is presented to the next meeting of the Community Planning Board for noting and endorsement. This was seconded by Councillor Divers.

Following further consideration the Council unanimously agreed:

- i) to authorise the Chief Executive to sign the Strategic Partnership Agreement on behalf of Moray Council;
- ii) to request the North East Population Health Alliance provide the Council with a progress report on the Strategic Partnership Agreement in March 2024; and
- iii) that the Agreement be noted and endorsed by the Community Planning Board.

10. Finance Policy Reviews

The meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) inviting the Council to approve changes to the Council's Financial Regulations, Authorisation Policy, Grant Funding Procedures and Anti Money Laundering Policy.

Councillor Mustard raised concerns that the documents did not use gender neutral language and that all Council documents should be written in that form.

In response, the Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance confirmed that he would remind Officers of the need for gender neutrality when writing, reviewing and updating Council documents.

Following consideration the Council unanimously agreed to provide comments on the following documents by mid September 2023 which will be further reviewed in light of comments received and submitted to the next meeting of Moray Council on 27 September for approval:

- i) the revised Financial Regulations as set out in Appendix 1;
- ii) the revised Authorisation Policy as set out in Appendix 2;

- iii) Grant Funding Procedures as set out in Appendix 3; and
- iv) The Anti Money Laundering Policy set out in Appendix 4.

11. Review of Second Tier Governance Documents

The meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) asking the Council to agree a programme of review of the Second Tier Governance Documents.

Following consideration the Council unanimously agreed to approve:

- i) the index and priority for review of the Second Tier Governance Documents contained in Appendix 1; and
- ii) the Notice of Motion flowchart attached as Appendix 2 and Notice of Motion template attached as Appendix 3.

12. Question Time

CCTV Update

Under reference to paragraph 16 of the minute of the meeting of 28 June 2023, Councillor Warren sought an update on the CCTV installation in Buckie.

In response, the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) confirmed the following:

Elgin, Lossiemouth and Forres are fully operational, 2 cameras were operational in Buckie and 1 camera in Keith, there are issues with mobile data to the 2nd camera, however once a mobile sim has been received, the cameras will be handed over to the contractor.

Under reference to paragraph 16 of the minute of the meeting of 28 June 2023, Councillor Gatt sought confirmation on what can be done to ensure there is no break in CCTV provision as has been experience recently.

In response, the Head of Economic Growth and Development advised that the work currently being done was as a result of very little maintenance on the previous CCTV system and therefore the equipment and systems had become very antiquated. He further added that the new system is up to date and fit for purpose and more modern technology to get high quality pictures which are fed into the Police station. The main issues in delivering this project has been around lack of broadband capacity within certain towns which resulted in the scope of the project having to be amended to accommodate the issues.

Moray Leisure Centre Expansion Update

Under reference to paragraph 20 of the minute of the meeting of 28 June 2023 Councillor Warren sought an update on the Moray Leisure Centre expansion.

In response, the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) confirmed that work has been ongoing to investigate and progress the issues that were identified in the previous report to Council, the

issues are particularly complex and Officers are not in a position to give a detailed update at this time other than to assure Members that work is ongoing.

Potential Reduction of Degree Courses at UHi Moray

Councillor Morrison stated that the SNP group had been contacted by concerned constituents alerting the group to the fact of a potential reduction in the number of degree courses being available at UHi Moray, specifically humanity courses such as History and sought agreement from the Council Leader that it is essential that the offer from UHi be as wide and encompassing as possible to ensure that Moray retains a percentage of school leavers and offers are attractive to learners. She further added that the SNP group will be writing to the Minister of Higher and Further Education and Rural Affairs as well as the Chief Executive of UHi Moray to raise concerns and urged other Groups and individual Councillors to do the same.

Councillor Morrison further asked if the issue could be raised at the next meeting of the Community Planning Board and could the Leader seek clarity from the UHi representative on the Community Planning Board?

In response, the Council Leader stated that she would be very happy to support the request.

13. Property Acquisition - Compulsory Purchase Order

The meeting had before it, a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) providing an update to the Council on the Elgin regeneration project and asking the Council to authorise use of compulsory purchase powers to secure the delivery of Moray Growth Deal (MGD) projects in Elgin.

Following consideration the Council unanimously agreed to:

- i) endorse the decision to promote a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) in respect of the property as detailed in para 5.10 in line with delegated authority referred to in para 4.6, subject to back to back legal agreements being completed between the Council and respective partners;
- ii) continue to negotiate with the owners to seek satisfactory resolution in parallel to the CPO process; and
- iii) delegate to the Head of Housing and Property and Head of Economic Growth and Development, in consultation with the Chair and Depute Chair, to carry out the actions as set out in para 5.11.