

# MORAY COUNCIL

## Minute of Meeting of the Economic Development and Infrastructure Services Committee

Tuesday, 22 March 2022

### Various Locations via Video-Conference

#### **PRESENT**

Councillor David Bremner, Councillor Theresa Coull, Councillor John Cowe, Councillor Gordon Cowie, Councillor John Divers, Councillor Tim Eagle, Councillor Claire Feaver, Councillor Graham Leadbitter, Councillor Marc Macrae, Councillor Maria McLean, Councillor Ray McLean, Councillor Amy Taylor, Councillor Sonya Warren

#### **APOLOGIES**

Councillor Walter Wilson

#### **IN ATTENDANCE**

Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance), Head of Environmental and Commercial Services, Head of Economic Growth and Development, Head of Housing and Property Services, Consultancy Manager, Transportation Manager, Environmental Protection Manager, Legal Services Manager and Mrs L Rowan, Committee Services Officer as Clerk to the Committee.

### **1 Chair**

Councillor Leadbitter, being Chair of the Economic Development and Infrastructure Services Committee, chaired the meeting.

### **2 Declaration of Group Decisions and Members Interests**

In terms of Standing Order 20 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.

### **3 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 items of business appearing at the relevant paragraphs 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.

**4 Minute of Meeting dated 8 February 2022**

The minute of the meeting of the Economic Development and Infrastructure Services Committee dated 8 February 2022 was submitted and approved.

**5 Written Questions**

The Committee noted that no written questions had been submitted.

**6 Hopeman Waiting Restrictions Traffic Regulation Order**

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) asked the Committee to consider an objection to the proposed Road Traffic Regulation Order - "Moray Council ((Prohibition of Waiting - Harbour Street and Adjoining Streets, Hopeman) Order 1998 (Amendment No. 1)) Order 2021".

Councillor Cowe acknowledged the parking implications for residents of Harbour Street due to Hopeman being a popular tourist attraction and welcomed the confirmation that the resident who had objected to the proposed traffic regulation order had been awarded a blue badge which allowed parking on a double yellow line, providing no obstruction is caused and moved the recommendations as printed in the report. This was seconded by Councillor R McLean.

Thereafter, the Committee agreed to:

1. over-rule the outstanding objection as outlined in Appendix 3 of the report and approve the Traffic Regulation Order; and
2. authorise the Head of Environmental and Commercial Services and Legal Services Manager to make the undernoted Order:  
"Moray Council ((Prohibition of Waiting – Harbour Street and Adjoining Streets, Hopeman) Order 1998 (Amendment NO. 1)) Order 2021"

**7 Environmental & Commercial Services & Economic Growth & Development Service Capital & Revenue Budget Monitoring to 31 December 2021**

Under reference to paragraph 7 of the Minute of the meeting of the Corporate Committee dated 30 November 2021, a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) informed the Committee of the current position regarding Environmental and Commercial Services and Economic Growth and Development Services (Economic Development) Capital and Revenue Budgets.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to note the budget monitoring report for the period to 31 December 2021.

## **8 Roads Maintenance Revenue and Capital Budget 2022-2023**

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) asked the Committee to note outturn position for 2021/22 and approve detailed plans for the expenditure of funds allocated from the Revenue Budget 2022/23 to Roads Maintenance and from the Capital Budget 2022/23 including resurface/reconstruction, surface dressing, footways, drainage, lighting column replacement and lighting improvements.

During discussion, Councillor Warren stated that during her term as Councillor, she had regularly sought updates in relation to the Council using recycled plastic for road repairs and queried whether any trials had been carried out.

In response, the Head of Environmental and Commercial Services advised that this is being considered nationally however currently there is insufficient data to ascertain whether this would be a suitable alternative and that further information in relation to the use of recycled plastic for road repairs will be provided to the Committee following the meeting.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to:

1. approve the detailed allocation of funds, from the Revenue and Capital Budget 2022/23, to Roads Maintenance activities, as outlined in Section 5 of this report;
2. grant delegated authority to the Roads Maintenance Manager to proceed with necessary roads maintenance works whilst noting that the Roads Maintenance Manager will, as soon as possible, publish a main list of schemes, which can be funded from the budget provision recommended in this report, and a reserve list of desirable schemes, which cannot presently be funded, along with a list of projects to be funded from the Capital allocation;
3. note that the list of schemes will be drawn up in accordance with the principles and objectives detailed in this report, in the Roads Asset Management Plan and in the Capital Plan; and
4. that further information in relation to the use of recycled plastic for road repairs be provided to the Committee following the meeting.

## **9 Transportation Capital and Revenue Budgets 2022-23**

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) informed the Committee of plans to deliver the capital and revenue programme in Transportation for 2022/23.

During discussion, it was noted that some Local Authorities were reviewing school transportation in light of the free bus pass which is now available to children and it was queried whether there were any savings to be made in this regard.

In response, the Transportation Manager agreed that consideration would be given to any crossover between school transportation and public transportation when developing the Bus Revolution project.

During further discussion surrounding the Dial-M bus service, it was noted that many members of the public were not aware of the service and that everyone is eligible to use it and it was asked if the service could be promoted, highlighting that it is available for everyone to use.

In response, the Transportation Manager agreed that the Dial-M bus service, including those eligible to use it, would be promoted via the Council's social media. Thereafter, the Committee agreed:

1. to approve the plans to deliver the capital and revenue programme for 2022/23 as contained in this report;
2. to delegate authority to the Head of Environmental and Commercial Services to apply for grants for the funding areas set out in this report at paras 4.8, 5.15 and 7.12;
3. that consideration would be given to any crossover between school transportation and public transportation when developing the Bus Revolution project; and
4. that the Dial-M bus service, including those eligible to use it, would be promoted via the Council's social media.

## **10 Flood Risk Management and Bridges Capital and Revenue Budgets 2022-23**

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) informed the Committee of the Flood Risk Management Schedule of Clearance and Repair for 2022/2023 and of the Bridge Maintenance Schedule of Works and the programme of capital works for bridges.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed:

1. the Flood Risk Management Schedule of Clearance and Repair for 2022/23; and
2. the proposed Schedules of Road Bridge Revenue and Capital Maintenance Works and Non-network Bridge Capital Maintenance Works to be undertaken for 2022/23.

## **11 Bus Revolution Operational Plan Report**

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) informed the Committee of operational plans in relation to enhanced bus services as part of Moray Growth Deal.

During discussion surrounding the 309 bus service, it was queried whether this service could continue beyond the train station on to the Town Centre.

In response, the Transportation Manager agreed that consideration will be given to continuing the 309 bus service on to Keith Town Centre following the train station stop.

Thereafter, the Committee agreed:

1. to approve the operational detail of proposed enhancements to bus services set out in this report, subject to Full Business Case approval of the Moray Growth Deal project, in order to apply for necessary regulatory consents;
2. to note that as described in para 3.17 the Dial M brand will be replaced by the m.connect brand identity for all Moray Council demand responsive and timetabled services; and
3. that consideration be given to continuing the 309 bus service on to Keith Town Centre following the train station stop.

## **12 Economy, Environment and Finance (EEF) Service Plans 2022-23**

Councillor Eagle left the meeting at this juncture.

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) invited the Committee to consider the Economy, Environment and Finance Service Plans for 2022-23, noting that the Service Plan for Financial Services was considered at Corporate Committee on 15 March 2022, the Economic Growth and Development Services Plan will also be considered at the Planning and Regulatory Services Committee on 4 April 2022 and the Housing and Property Services Plan at the Housing and Community Safety Committee on 22 March 2022, each in terms of their respective remits.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to approve the Service Plans for Economic Growth and Development, Housing and Property Services and Environmental and Commercial Services as set out in Appendices 1-3 of the report in terms of the remit of the Committee and subject to later scrutiny and approval as set out in paragraph 1.1 of the report where required.

## **13 Renewables Income Fund**

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) asked the Committee to recommend to Council participation in an exercise to identify economic opportunity and methods of maximising local income associated with renewables.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to recommend that Council approve the provision of a one off £5k budget to facilitate a contribution towards consultancy work on a renewables income fund report for the Highlands and Islands Region with other HIREP partners.

## **14 Question Time**

Councillor Eagle re-joined the meeting during Question Time.

Under reference to paragraph 11 of the Minute of the meeting of the Economic Development and Infrastructure Services Committee dated 8 February 2022, Councillor Warren sought an update in relation to the Moray Loves Local gift card.

In response, the Head of Economic Growth and Development advised that a report is to be considered by Moray Council on 6 April 2022 in relation to the Economic Recovery Fund which will support the Scotland Loves Local Scheme and that it is hoped to employ a member of staff to promote this.

Councillor Warren asked for a further update in relation to action that the Council is taking to support Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) who are struggling with rising energy costs.

In response, the Head of Economic Growth and Development advised that the Moray Economic Partnership are aware of the pressures on SMEs as a result of the rising cost of fuel prices however advised that the Council is limited in taking any action as the energy crisis is for the UK Government to address.

Councillor Feaver asked that a report be brought to a future meeting of the Economic Development and Infrastructure Services Committee to consider the lack of subject choice and knowledge depth in our education offer and the impact this has on our economy and service delivery.

In response, the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) advised that if the Committee would like further information in relation to skills development then a briefing could be provided in the first instance with a Notice of Motion or something similar requested by the new Council following the Local Government Election in May 2022.

The Head of Economic Growth and Development further advised that a report of this nature could cross over with the remit of the Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee and that part of the Moray Growth Deal is to attract and retain young people in Moray. He further advised that the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan is developing an apprenticeship strategy and that subject choice could be considered at that point.

Councillor Warren queried whether Moray Council had signed up for the Scottish Workplace Challenge and whether this had been promoted.

In response, the Transportation Manager advised that this had been promoted on the Council's Interchange and that further information would be passed to Councillor Warren following the meeting.

Councillor Eagle stated that he had received a number of complaints recently as the public toilets in Findochty had been closed due to a problem with the running water and sought an update as to when these would re-open.

In response, the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) advised that an updated in this regard would be provided to Councillor Eagle following the meeting.

The Chair acknowledged that this was the last meeting of the Economic Development and Infrastructure Services Committee for this current Council and thanked the Members for the useful debate over the last 5 years and Officers for providing comprehensive reports for consideration.

The Chair further noted that this was the last meeting of Mr Stephen Cooper, Head of Environmental and Commercial Services prior to his upcoming retirement and the Committee joined the Chair in thanking him for his service and wished him a happy, healthy retirement.

## **16 St Giles Multi Storey Car Park [Para 8]**

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) informed the Committee of the current information and financial implications in relation to the car park.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed:

1. to note that the costs of repair / rebuild do not represent value for money; and
2. that officers develop further options for the future utilisation of the site to be brought to a future committee meeting.