

MORAY COUNCIL

MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

7 AUGUST 2018

COUNCIL CHAMBERS, ELGIN

PRESENT

Councillors A McLean (Chair); G Alexander; F Brown; J Cowe, L Creswell; J Divers; T Eagle; R Edwards; L Laing; M Macrae; S Morrison; and S Warren.

APOLOGIES

Apologies were intimated on behalf of Councillor G Leadbitter.

IN ATTENDANCE

The Chief Executive; the Corporate Director (Corporate Services); the Head of Legal and Democratic Services; the Head of Financial Services; the Head of Development Services; Frances Garrow, the Joint Acting Head of Human Resources and ICT; Phil McDonald the Joint Acting Head of Human Resources and ICT, the Payments Manager; the Educational Resources Manager, the Environmental Health Manager, the Customer Services Manager and the Democratic Services Manager as Clerk to the Meeting.

1. EXAM RESULTS

In noting that it was exam results day the Meeting joined the Chairman in wishing all the pupils and all the parents and teachers and support staff who supported them good luck and highlighted the Skills Development Scotland line which is available to offer help and advice to anyone who may have not done as well as expected.

2. CONGRATULATIONS

The Meeting joined the Chairman in congratulating Councillor Leadbitter and his wife Louise on their recent marriage.

3. DECLARATION OF GROUP DECISIONS AND MEMBER'S 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.

4. EXEMPT INFORMATION

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.

<u>Paragraph No. of Minute</u>	<u>Paragraph No. of Schedule 7A</u>
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18

1 and 11

**5. MINUTE OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE DATED
8 MAY 2018**

The minute of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee dated 8 May 2018 was submitted and approved.

The Chairman expressed his thanks to Councillor Alexander for his time as Chair.

6. WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Committee noted that no written questions had been submitted.

7. EFFICIENCY STATEMENT FOR 2017/18

A report was submitted by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) providing the Committee with a copy of the Council's Annual Efficiency Statement for 2017/18.

During discussion Councillor Cowe congratulated the Estates staff for the work undertaken in relation to the Industrial Estates.

Thereafter following further discussion the Committee agreed to note the annual Efficiency Statement for 2017/18.

8. PROCUREMENT ANNUAL REPORT

A report was submitted by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) providing the Committee with an updated report on Procurement in Moray and in particular report on procurement performance for 2017/2018.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to note the overall procurement performance for 2017/2018 set out in the Annual Report as summarised in Appendix 1 and in Section 4 of the Report.

**9. AUDIT SCOTLAND'S REPORT ON THE HOUSING BENEFIT SERVICE IN
MORAY**

A report was submitted by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) informing the Committee of the findings from an external audit of the Council's Housing Benefit Service. The report also provided the Service's response to mitigate "risks to continuous improvement" identified through the audit.

Following consideration, the Committee noted the findings in Audit Scotland's report and noted the actions and response to the highlighted risks to continuous improvement as detailed in the Report.

The Chair congratulated staff on the improvement made.

10. DIGITAL PUBLIC SERVICES – PROGRESS REPORT

A report was submitted by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) inviting the Committee to consider progress against the Digital Public Services project.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to note:-

- (i) the general progress for the period to June 2018;
- (ii) the risks being managed by the Digital Services Working Group and actions being taken to mitigate these risks; and
- (iii) that development work will be mainstreamed into the ICT project workload and the project manager will work with the service areas to document the benefits arising from the new solutions as they are implemented.

11. ICT AND DIGITAL STRATEGY AND PLAN

A report was submitted by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) inviting the Committee to consider and approve the ICT and Digital Strategy (2018-23) and the associated Action Plan.

During discussion clarification was sought in regard to the uptake of the use of video conferencing equipment in schools and also whether it would be possible to enable students to link to UHI courses through the use of this equipment and it was agreed that these issues be raised through Children and Young People's Services Committee by Councillor Warren in her capacity as Chair of the Committee.

Thereafter the Committee agreed to:-

- (i) approve the ICT and Digital Strategy (2018-23) and the associated Action Plan; and
- (ii) note that the Action Plan is to be reviewed 6 monthly by the Corporate and Senior Management Team to ensure it continues to reflect priorities.

12. CORPORATE SERVICES: SERVICE PLANS 2018-19

A report was submitted by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) inviting the Committee to consider the Corporate Services Department Service Plans for 2018-19.

Following consideration the Committee approved the Service Plans within the Corporate Services Department.

13. COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER: RENTAL SUPPORT

A report was submitted by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) inviting the Committee to consider the level of rental concessions granted to community bodies occupying Council property and to identify any arrangements that it requires to be reviewed in relation to rental support during the 2019/20 financial year.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to note the extent of ongoing rental support provided to community bodies as listed in Appendices 1 and 2 of the Report and the arrangements planned for review.

14. WATER INTENDED FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION (PRIVATE SUPPLIES) (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2017

A report was submitted by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) informing the Committee of the new legislation in relation to private water supplies and associated updated charges.

During discussion the Chairman advised the Committee that for clarification the wording in relation to recommendations 2.1(ii) and (iii) had been amended and the amendments were agreed.

Thereafter the Committee agreed to:-

- (i) note the changes in the legislation;
- (ii) approve the proposed sampling and risk assessment charges of £186 and £100 respectively with effect from 1 September 2018 in relation to the legislative requirements contained in the Water Intended for Human Consumption (Private Supplies) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 with immediate effect; and
- (iii) approve that charges be thereafter increased until full cost recovery is achieved in a time scale to be determined as part of the Council's financial planning process.

15. LOSSIEMOUTH HIGH SCHOOL REPLACEMENT PROJECT

A report was submitted by the Acting Corporate Director (Education and Social Care) updating the Committee on the cost and funding arrangements for the Lossiemouth High School project and seek approval to enter in to the design and build agreement.

During discussion the Head of Legal and Democratic Services advised the Committee of some minor changes to the recommendation in relation to the signing of documentation required for the project which has to be undertaken in Edinburgh by amending it to read that authorisation be given to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to sign all documentation (or in his absence any other of the Council's authorised signatories), as this would allow flexibility in that should any one of those signatories already be required to be in Edinburgh at that time they could combine their business and undertake the sign off of the documentation. This was agreed.

Thereafter the Committee agreed to:-

- (i) note the cost and funding arrangements set out in paragraph 3 of the Report;
- (ii) authorise the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to consider and agree any further minor amendments to the Lossiemouth High School project documents after the date of this meeting;
- (iii) authorise the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (or in his absence any of the other council authorised signatory namely the Chief Executive, a Member of the Corporate Management Team, the Head of Financial Services, the Legal Services Manager (Property & Contracts) or the Legal Services Manager (Litigation & Licensing)) to:
 - (a) sign all documentation required for the Lossiemouth High School project on behalf of the Council including:
 - the Design and Build Development Agreement between (1) the Council and (2) hub North Scotland Limited;
 - the Contractor's Collateral Agreement between (1) the Council and (2) Balfour Beatty Construction Limited;
 - the Designers Collateral Agreements among (1) the Council and (2) each of (one) JMArchitects Limited; (two) DSSR; and (three) Fairhurst; and
 - any additional or ancillary documents in relation to the Project to which the Council is required to be a party
- (iv) note that the commercial close is targeted for 14 September 2018; and
- (v) that in order to meet the targeted the commercial close date of 14 September 2018 and due to the requirement for a signed copy of the ratified minute being required as verification, it is agreed that the minute of this meeting be submitted to the next meeting of Moray Council on 5 September 2018 for ratification and thereafter the Chair of this Committee signs a copy of the ratified minute as verification that approval has been granted.

16. CORPORATE SERVICES PERFORMANCE REPORT – OCTOBER 2017 TO MARCH 2018

A report was submitted by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) outlining the performance of the service for the period from October 2017 to March 2018.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to note the performance outlined in the report and the actions being taken to seek improvements where required.

17. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE PERFORMANCE REPORT – OCTOBER 2017 TO MARCH 2018

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive outlining the performance of the service for the period from 1 October 2017 to 31 March 2018.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to note the performance outlined in the report and the actions being taken to seek improvements where required.

18. QUESTION TIME

Councillor Alexander stated that over the past 6 years the council has done its utmost to get its message across to the public in regard to the financial situation it is facing and whilst he was of the opinion that the public of Moray have got that message he was disappointed with the recent headline in the Press and Journal relating to the school clothing grant which suggested that the Moray Council had doubled the grant. This in his opinion was misleading the public in thinking that whilst the council are reporting that it is facing a financial crisis it is spending money by increasing the grant. In truth the Council is in fact only increasing its contribution towards the grant by £5 from £45 to £50 with the Scottish Government contributing the remaining £50. He therefore asked that the Chairman support his plea in urging the press to report the full facts in future.

In response the Chairman agreed and that it be noted that the Scottish Government have increased their contribution by £50 and which now brings Moray in line with other local authorities.

Councillor Creswell sought an update on when the briefing for Member on the Transform Process was due to take place.

In response the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) advised that some dates were being planned for later in September.

19. BUDGET 2019/20 – WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS [PARAS 1 AND 11]

A report was submitted by the Acting Corporate Director (Corporate Services) asking the Committee to consider applications under the terms of the agreed Voluntary Early Retirement (VER) Scheme.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to approve the applications for Voluntary Early Retirement contained within Appendix 1 of the Report.