

# **MORAY COUNCIL**

## **Minute of Meeting of the Economic Development & Infrastructure Services Committee**

**Tuesday, 19 February 2019**

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

### **PRESENT**

Councillor David Bremner, Councillor Theresa Coull, Councillor John Cowe, Councillor Gordon Cowie, Councillor John Divers, Councillor Ryan Edwards, Councillor Claire Feaver, Councillor Graham Leadbitter, Councillor Marc Macrae, Councillor Maria McLean, Councillor Shona Morrison, Councillor Ron Shepherd, Councillor Sonya Warren

### **APOLOGIES**

### **IN ATTENDANCE**

The Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure), the Head of Direct Services, the Head of Development Services, the Roads Maintenance Manager, the Consultancy Manager, the Transportation Manager, Moray Access Manager, Ms R MacDougall, Planning Officer and Mrs L Rowan, Committee Services Officer as Clerk to the Meeting.

#### **1 Chair**

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

#### **2 Welcome**

The Committee joined the Chair in welcoming Hannah Ross from Speyside High School who was working alongside Councillor Laing to experience a day in the life of a Councillor.

#### **3 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 Members interests in respect of any item on the agenda.

#### **4 Resolution**

The Council 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 Number of Minute</u>	<u>Paragraph Number of Schedule 7A</u>
16	8&9
17	8&9

## **5 Minute of Meeting dated 4 December 2018**

The minute of the meeting of this Committee dated 4 December 2018 was submitted and approved.

## **6 Written Questions**

The Committee noted the following written question that had been submitted by Councillor Macrae:

### **Parking Notices**

Following on from the report to Policy and Resources Committee on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2019 “Charging for Services”, I would be grateful for answers to the following.

How many parking notices were issued in 2018?

How many of these notices were paid within 14 days at the lesser rate of £60?

How many notices were paid at the standard rate of £80?

How many notices remain unpaid?

### **RESPONSE**

- i. There were 1,391 excess charge notices issued in 2018
- ii. 747 excess charge notices were paid within 14 days (£60)
- iii. 219 excess charge notices were paid at the standard rate (£80)
- iv. There are 425 excess charge notices unpaid that are pursued through debt recovery.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Macrae asked, of the 425 pursued through debt recovery, how many of these had been successfully recovered and at what cost to the Council.

In response, the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) advised that the 425 unpaid excess charge notices would have been passed to a debt collecting company, Scott & Co who pursue low level civil debts and advised that she would enquire if that specific information is available and, if it was, circulate to members of the Committee.

## **7 Roads Asset Management Planning**

A report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) informed the Committee of the latest road network information and how it compares following the 2016 condition modelling forecast.

The report highlighted that reduced capital investment into the roads network is having an impact on the Council's road condition index (RCI) and its ranking position in comparison with other Scottish authorities which is resulting in a deterioration in the road network, placing the Council on target to be at mid table position by the end of 2021-22.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed:

- i. to note the latest road condition indicator (RCI) results for Moray Council, and our position when compared nationally as set out in Section 4 of the report;
- ii. to recommend to Full Council that the current capital investment level of £2.042m per annum continues allowing the road network's condition to deteriorate to a level where Moray would be mid-table when compared nationally; and
- iii. that the RCI results continue to be monitored and reported back on an annual basis to this committee.

## **8 Moray Core Paths Plan Review - Proposed Modifications and Outstanding Objections**

Under reference to paragraph 5 of the Minute of this Committee dated 23 January 2018, a report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) asked that the Committee approve the submission of the Draft Amended Moray Core Paths Plan 2018, inclusive of a list of proposed modifications, as the Modified Amended Plan for adoption along with the Council's statements in response to the 17 outstanding objections to the Plan, to the Scottish Government.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed that the:

- i. Draft Amended Moray Core Paths Plan 2018, together with the list of modifications in Appendix 1, be submitted to the Scottish Government as the Modified Amended Plan for adoption; and
- ii. seventeen outstanding formal objections and the Council's statements of response also be submitted to the Scottish Government.

## **9 North East Flood Risk Management Plan Interim Report**

Under reference to paragraph 11 of the minute of this Committee dated 4 December 2019, a report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) asked the Committee to ratify the Local Flood Risk Management Plan Interim Report for the North East Local Plan District.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to ratify the Interim Report for the North East Local Plan District, under Section 37 of the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009.

## **10 Moray Town Centre Health Checks 2018**

A report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) provided the Committee with key findings from the Moray Town Centre Health Check 2018 and advised that, following a meeting of the Planning and Regulatory Services Committee on 18 December 2018, it had been agreed that the Moray Town Centre Health Check Report 2018 would be a material consideration in future retail planning policy and planning application decision making.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to note:

- i. the findings of the Moray Town Centre Health Checks Report 2018 as set out in Appendix 1 of the report;
- ii. that the Town Centre Health Check Report 2018 will be published on the Planning and Development website pages; and
- iii. that the Town Centre Health Checks Report 2018 has been adopted by the Planning and Regulatory Services Committee as a material consideration in future retail planning policy and planning application decision making and to the publication of the report.

## **11 Elgin Business Improvement District – Renewal Ballot**

A report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) sought the Committee's approval to support the re-ballot for the Elgin Business Improvement District (BID).

The report stated that Elgin BID has proven to be a sustainable regeneration model for Elgin which has, though close working with its partners, been able to attract substantial additional investment into the area. A successful renewal ballot of the Elgin BID will enable implementation of further actions and priorities which will ensure a vibrant future for the Elgin.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to:

- i. continue the support of the Elgin BID through undertaking the re-ballot; and

- ii. note a further report will be presented to this Committee with full business plan details including levy and any potential future financial implications for the Council.

## **12 Supplier Development Programme**

Under reference to paragraph 9 of the Minute of this Committee dated 15 May 2018, a report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) provided the Committee with information in relation to membership of the Supplier Development Programme (SDP). SDP provides training to upskill small and medium sized enterprises looking to win business from the public sector.

During discussion, the Committee welcomed the report and recognised the benefits small businesses would gain by the Council having a full membership with SDP.

The Chair moved that the Committee agreed to trial a full membership with SDP in 2019/20 and that the results of this trial be reported to future meeting of this Committee. Their being no-one otherwise minded, the Committee agreed to:

- i. note what benefits full membership of the Supplier Development Programme would bring; and
- ii. trial full membership in 2019/20 and review the trial through a report to a future meeting of this committee.

## **13 Scottish Local Authorities Economic Development Group Performance Indicators 2017-18**

A report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) presented the Committee with an annual report providing information about the Council's and other Local Authorities performance in relation to Economic Development activities during 2017/18. The SLAED Indicators Framework provides a basis for collating consistent data, which can be used to better understand the impact of activities supported by the Council and other Local Authorities and identify potential areas for improvement.

Following lengthy consideration during which the Committee discussed the potential impact Brexit would have on businesses in Moray who employ EU Nationals, the number of employees who are employed part time or on zero hours contracts and the excellent service provided by Business Gateway, the Committee agreed to note the SLAED's annual report on Economic Development performance.

## **14 Direct Services and Development Services (Economic Development) Capital and Revenue Budget Monitoring to 31 December 2018**

A report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) informed the Committee of the current position regarding Direct Services 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 2018.

## **15 Question Time**

Councillor Warren, having recently spoken with concerned business owners regarding Brexit, sought clarification as to what action the Council is taking, in conjunction with Community Planning Partners, to engage with Europe regardless of the Brexit outcome and asked if the Council is committed to continue to engage with other cities and countries to ensure that Moray remains a good place to work and do business.

In response the Chair stated that the Highlands & Islands Territorial Partnership and the Highlands & Islands European partnership are trying to maintain links and are working closely with Civil Servants based in Brussels, Scottish Government European Funding Civil Servants and the Scottish Office using a collaborative approach.

The Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) advised that there is ongoing work being undertaken through the Convention of Highlands and Islands and that, internally, the Chief Executive is chairing a regular Brexit Preparedness meeting where Service Managers can share reports received from the Scottish Government regarding emerging issues eg pressure in environmental health issues. She further advised that there is also potential for some funding support for an additional resource in local authorities to undertake some of the additional work required in the event of a no deal scenario.

Councillor Warren was concerned that some small businesses may struggle to keep up with legislative change and asked how the Council could assist.

In response, the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) advised that the Highlands and Islands Enterprise website had tool kits available to help small businesses with regard to Brexit and agreed to speak to the Communications Team to explore ways to share these links via the Council's website and social media platforms.

Councillor Morrison sought clarification as to whether there is a contingency plan for the provision of school meals given the restrictions that might take place as a result of Brexit.

In response the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) advised that a large amount of food for school meals was sourced locally and that, whilst choice may be impacted, healthy nutritious school meals would still be provided.

## **16 Elgin Transport Strategy [Para 8 & 9]**

Under reference to paragraph 3 of the Minute of Moray Council dated 9 August 2017, a report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) asked the Committee to approve plans to deliver aspects of the Elgin Transport Strategy using committed third party funds.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to approve the commencement of design and delivery of improvements to The Wards approach of the Edgar Road/Glen Moray Drive/The Wards junction as set out in paragraph 6.5 of the report and, in the event that timescales allow, incorporate improvements as part of the full junction improvement scheme to be funded via the Scottish Government Housing Infrastructure Fund.

## **17       Dredger Collaboration and Business Case [Para 8 & 9]**

Under reference to paragraph 18 of the Minute of this Committee dated 14 August 2018, a report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) updated the Committee on the result of the discussions with partnering authorities in the Northern Roads Collaboration Joint Committee (NRJCC) to use the Council's dredger and provide and progress report on the dredger's commercial operation.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to note the outcome of the discussion with partnering authorities in the (NRJCC) to use the Council's dredger as outlined in paragraph 6 of this report and the update on the dredger's commercial operation.