

# MORAY COUNCIL

## Minute of Meeting of the Corporate Committee

Tuesday, 30 November 2021

Remote Locations via Video Conference,

### **PRESENT**

Councillor George Alexander, Councillor James Allan, Councillor Frank Brown, Councillor John Cowe, Councillor John Divers, Councillor Tim Eagle, Councillor Claire Feaver, Councillor Donald Gatt, Councillor Graham Leadbitter, Councillor Aaron McLean, Councillor Shona Morrison, Councillor Sonya Warren.

### **APOLOGIES**

Councillor Amy Taylor, Councillor Walter Wilson

### **IN ATTENDANCE**

Also in attendance at the above meeting were the 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 Financial Services, Benefits and Money Advice Manager, Equal Opportunities Officer, Asset Management Co-ordinator, and Lindsey Robinson, Committee Services Officer, as Clerk to the Committee.

#### **1. Chair**

Councillor Aaron McLean, as Chair of the Corporate Committee, chaired the meeting.

#### **2. Emergency Response Friday 26 November 2021**

The Committee joined the Chair in thanking Mr Edward Thomas, Head of Housing and Property and his team for their hard work over the weekend and echoed the Committee's thanks to the community for coming together and helping each other out during the storm.

#### **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 Member's interests in respect of any item on the agenda.

#### **4. Resolution**

The Meeting resolved that under 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 18 of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information of the class described in the relevant Paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

Paragraph Number of Minute	Paragraph Number of Schedule 7A and reason
18	11
	Information relating to any consultations or negotiations in connection with any labour relations.
<b>5. Minute of the meeting 12 October 2021</b>	

The Minute of the Meeting of the Corporate Committee dated 12 October 2021 was submitted and approved.

## **6. Written Questions \*\***

The Committee noted that no written questions had been submitted.

## **7. Town Twinning**

A report by the Chief Executive asked the Committee to make recommendations on a suggested response to an approach about establishing twinning relations and suggested sectors for co-operation.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed:

- i. to note Officers have looked into the suggested fields of partnership and co-operation and the responses outlined in section 3 of the report;
- ii. that it be left to the discretion of Visit Moray Speyside to respond to the approach as outlined in paragraph 3.7 of the report;
- iii. that this be placed on the agenda for the next appropriate meeting of the Moray Economic Partnership to assess the level of interest; and
- iv. that the appropriate authorities in Jiaxing Province be advised of the above.

## **8. Revenue Budget Monitoring to 30 September 2021**

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) advised the Committee of the revenue budget monitoring position to 30 September 2021 and of the current estimated out-turn for 2021/22.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to note:

- i. the budget monitoring position of £167,000 over budget for 2021/22 as at 30 September 2021;
- ii. that this position consists of an underspend on Devolved Schools budgets of £864,000, an underspend of £1,258,000 on Children's Services, an overspend on Social Care Services delivered in behalf of the Moray Integrated Joint Board (MIJB) of £1,838,000, on overspend of £213,000 for Partnership Nurseries and an overspend on other services of £238,000.
- iii. movement of £1,915,000 in the General Revenue Grant, as detailed in paragraph 3.4;

- iv. the current estimated out-turn for 2021/22 of an overspend of £341,000 and an increase in the retention under the Business Rates Incentivisation Scheme (BRIS) of £23,000 resulting in an increase in the planned use of Council reserves by £318,000 from that budgeted for; and
- v. emerging budget pressures as summarised in paragraph 6.1.

## **9. Capital Plan 2021-22**

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) advised the Committee of the expenditure to 30 September 2021 under the Capital Plan for financial year 2021/22 and of estimates of projected expenditure profiled into quarters.

Following consideration where the officers answered questions on the delay to the Scottish Government Covid funding for Lossiemouth High School and Linkwood Primary School, and on the overspend on the Early Learning site in Keith, the Committee agreed to:

- i. note expenditure to 30 September 2021 of £12,406,000;
- ii. note the current projected expenditure of £43,465,000 for 2021/22 profiled into quarters, as set out in appendix 1;
- iii. note the projected overall expenditure for projects spanning more than one financial year, as set out in appendix 2; and
- iv. approve amendments to the 2021/22 and 2022/23 Capital Plan as detailed in section 6.1 of the report.

## **10. Performance Report (Financial Services) Period to September 2021**

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) informed the Committee of the performance of the service for the period to 30 September 2021.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to:

- i. note performance in the areas of Service Planning, Service Performance and other related data to the end of September 2021; and
- ii. note the actions being taken to improve performance where required.

## **11. Community Asset Transfer Request (2015 Act) Fishermen's Hall Buckie**

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) invited the Committee to consider an asset transfer request made under Part 5 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 in respect of the Fishermen's Hall, North Pringle Street, Buckie.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to:

- i. approve the request to transfer ownership of the Fishermen's Hall, North Pringle Street, Buckie, to the Fishermen's Hall Trust subject to the terms and conditions set out in paragraph 5.1 of the report;
- ii. authorise the Legal Services Manager to apply to the Sheriff Court for consent to transfer the property to the Trust; and
- iii. note that, if approved and unless otherwise agreed with the Trust, it will have 6 months from the date of the Council's Decision Notice to submit a formal offer to purchase the property, failing which the agreement will have no further effect and the statutory asset transfer process will end.

## **12. Winter Support Funding**

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) informed the Committee of the introduction and proposed implementation of the Scottish Government's Winter Support Funding in the final quarter of 2021/22.

During consideration, the Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance joined the Chair and Committee in thanking the Money Advice team for their hard work in keeping the service running throughout the pandemic.

Following further consideration, where Officers answered questions on how the funds are being publicised across Moray, the flexibility of the funding streams, and what could be done to help reduce poverty, the Benefits and Money Advice Manager advised that she would circulate an update of the funding streams to members in the new year, the Committee agreed to:

- i. note the work of the Money Advice Moray team and the success of the Flexible Food Fund scheme;
- ii. note the Scottish government's policy intentions of the new Winter Support Fund 2021/22;
- iii. approve the proposal at paragraphs 4.3 and 4.4 to enhance the existing Flexible Food Fund scheme for the final quarter of 2021/22 to deploy the Winter Support Fund and delegate authority to the Benefits and Money Advice Manager to determine and manage the amounts payable under the Scheme within the confines of the Scottish Government funding; and
- iv. authorise the allocation of Scottish Government pandemic funding to recruit one temporary post for a clerical assistant on grade 3 for a period of 12 months to support the Money Advice team.

## **13. Performance Report (Human Resources, Information Communications Technology and Organisational Development) Period to September 2021**

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) informed the Committee of the performance of the service for the period to September 2021.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to:

- i. note performance in the areas of Service Planning, Service Performance and other related data to the end of September 2021; and
- ii. note the actions being taken to improve performance where required.

#### **14. Order of Business**

In terms of Standing Order 28 the meeting agreed to vary the order of business set down on the agenda and take item 12 - Equality Outcomes as the next item of business to allow the Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance to reconnect following connection issues.

#### **15. Equality Outcomes**

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) asked the Committee to approve the publication of the Equality Outcomes Progress Report 2017-2021, the Mainstreaming Report 2021 and the Equality Outcomes for 2021-2025.

Following consideration, where Officers answered questions on the gender pay gap, the Committee agreed to approve the publication of the Equality Outcomes Progress Report 2017-2021, the Mainstreaming Report 2021 and the Equality Outcomes for 2021-2025.

#### **16. Performance Report (Governance, Strategy and Performance) Period to September 2021**

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) informed the Committee of the performance of the service for the period to 30 September 2021.

Following consideration, where Officers answered questions on the use of electronic forms, the Committee agreed to:

- i. note performance in the areas of Service Planning, Service Performance and other related data to the end of September 2021; and
- ii. note the actions being taken to improve performance where required.

#### **17. Question Time \*\*\***

Under reference to paragraph 5 of the Minute of the Meeting of this Committee dated 12 October 2021, Councillor Divers sought an update on the progress of the Platinum Jubilee Civic Honours Competition City Status Bid.

In response, the Chief Executive advised that resources are stretched and that staff are working to a tight timetable alongside Elgin Community Council, but everything is being done to ensure the deadline will be met.

#### **18. Living Wage Consolidation Update [para 11]**

A report by the Depute Chief Executive informed the Committee of the progress of consolidation of the Scottish Local Government Living Wage (SLGLW) into the Council's pay and grading structure for employees within scope of the national agreement of the Scottish Joint Council for Local Government Employees (LGE),

provide an assessment of the models under consideration and their implications; and seek direction on the strategic objectives and negotiating parameters for a collective agreement.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to:

- i. note the options put forward for achieving consolidation of the Scottish Local Government Living Wage into the Council's LGE pay and grading structure;
- ii. provide direction regarding the strategic objectives (paragraph 6.1 and 6.2 in the report) for assessing the five options put forward for consideration; and
- iii. instruct the head of HR, ICT and Organisational Development to progress discussions per paragraph 7.1 to 7.3 in the report, with the aim of reaching a preferred option within the parameters agreed by the Committee that could provide a collective agreement with the recognised Trade Unions, for consideration by the Council. The following is suggested for consideration to paragraph 7.3 in the report:
  - i. Endorse a) to c) as key requirements;
  - ii. Seek to achieve the best possible outcomes for d) to f) within the affordability parameters; and
  - iii. Agree proposed affordability proposals in g) and h).