

# **MORAY COUNCIL**

## **Minute of Meeting of the Moray Council**

**Wednesday, 15 and 20 September 2021**

**remote locations via video conference,**

### **PRESENT**

Councillor George Alexander, Councillor James Allan, Councillor David Bremner, Councillor Frank Brown, Councillor Theresa Coull, Councillor John Cowe, Councillor Paula Coy, Councillor Lorna Creswell, Councillor John Divers, Councillor Tim Eagle, Councillor Ryan Edwards, Councillor Claire Feaver, Councillor Donald Gatt, Councillor Graham Leadbitter, Councillor Marc Macrae, Councillor Aaron McLean, Councillor Maria McLean, Councillor Shona Morrison, Councillor Louise Nicol, Councillor Laura Powell, Councillor Derek Ross, Councillor Amy Taylor, Councillor Sonya Warren, Councillor Walter Wilson

### **APOLOGIES**

Councillor Gordon Cowie, Councillor Ray McLean

### **IN ATTENDANCE**

Also in attendance at the meeting were the Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance), Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development), Chief Officer, Health and Social Care, Head of Education, Head of Financial Services, Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance, Head of Education Resources and Communities, Carmen Gillies, Development Officer, Ewen Fowlie (Hub North Scotland) and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer as Clerk to the meeting.

#### **1. Declaration of Group Decisions and Members Interests \***

In terms of Standing Order 20 and the Councillors' Code of Conduct, the following declarations were made:

Councillor Bremner declared an interest in Item 6 as a resident in the area.

Councillors Brown, Coull, Eagle, Morrison, Nicol, and Warren declared an interest in Items 12 and 25a as members and substitute members of the Integration Joint Board.

Although they have yet to be appointed formally as members of the IJB, Councillor Divers and Edwards also declared an interest in Items 12 and 25a.

Councillor Gatt declared an interest in Item 22 as having a close family member working for Orbix and sought advice on whether he should remain in the meeting and take no part or whether he should leave the meeting for the duration of the discussion.

In response, the Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance stated that Councillor Gatt could remain in the meeting and take no part in the discussion due to the meeting being held remotely.

Councillor Eagle confirmed that the Conservative Group had discussed the agenda but no whip had been given on voting on any items on the agenda.

There were no further 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.

## **2. 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 27 and 28 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.

<b>Para Number of the Minute</b>	<b>Para Number of Schedule 7A</b>
12	Para 6 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person(s)
35	Para 6, 8 and 9 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person(s) and Information on proposed terms and/or expenditure to be incurred by the Authority

## **3. Minute of Meeting of 30 June 2021**

The minute of the meeting of 30 June 2021 was submitted and approved.

## **4. Written Questions \*\***

The Council noted that no written questions had been submitted.

## **5. Notice of Motion - River Spey**

A Notice of Motion was submitted by Councillor Macrae, seconded by Councillor Eagle in the following terms:

### **River Spey Flooding**

Over the last few years the residents of Garmouth have faced increased flooding events effecting several homes and businesses in and around the village. Despite

some discussions during committee and from the local MSP nothing has yet been put to council or the Scottish Government which seeks to alleviate the problem.

The community are deeply concerned about the increased flooding events and the local community council have undertaken significant work to look at soft engineering options to try and provide a solution.

Local community members forming part of Innes Community Council have provided the following documents, which are attached for information:

- i) a report from Innes Community Council highlighting their views on the flooding events and the work they have done;
- ii) a report from Dr Hamish Moir an expert in water management detailing the history of the area and potential solutions;
- iii) a cost breakdown of the Community Council proposed solution; and
- iv) pictures of the planned works.

We believe in community; we believe that where they come together to raise issues of importance to their towns and villages, we as elected members should be responsive. Today we wish to recognise the work of community members in reaching this point.

We ask the Council to -

- i) Recognise the Community concern around increased flooding events impacting upon Garmouth;
- ii) agree to Officers working with local groups including Innes Community Council and land owners to bring a report back to the 30 November meeting of the Council with potential solutions and indicative costs, including the community proposals above, in order that Councillors can agree the proposed way forward; and
- iii) ask Officers to engage with the Crown Estate and other relevant partners regarding the issue.

In response, Councillor Leadbitter, who was broadly supportive of the request, suggested the addition of the word 'constituted' in point 2 of the motion so it reads local constituted groups.

Councillor Macrae acknowledged that he was happy to accept the inclusion of the word constituted.

As there was no one otherwise minded the Council agreed to:

- i) recognise the community concern around increased flooding events impacting upon Garmouth.
- ii) agree to officers working with local constituted groups including Innes Community Council and land owners to bring a report back to the 30 November meeting of the Council with potential solutions and indicative

costs, including the community proposals above, in order that Councillors can agree the proposed way forward.

- iii) ask Officers to engage with the Crown Estate and other relevant partners regarding this issue.

## **6. Notice of Motion - Gulls**

A Notice of Motion was submitted by Councillor Eagle, seconded by Councillor Gatt in the following terms:

### **Gulls**

Gulls, also known locally as Seagulls are a prominent feature of coastal life. Due to various reasons Seagulls are often found in close contact with humans. In the past this has caused difficulties particularly as adult birds protect their young on residential streets. This year appears to have shown a significant rise in complaints throughout Moray.

There is no current duty on local authorities in Scotland to provide advice, support or action to local residents in dealing with Gull problems.

Given the level of public demand we ask council to direct officers to look into a package of options Moray Council could put in place to support communities, bringing back a paper detailing those options and costs.

We recognise that the administration have already instructed officers to undertake some work and we welcome cross-party working on what is an important issue to local residents. This motion seeks to formalise the work that has been asked for and provide officers with the assurance of cross party agreement -

We therefore ask Council to agree –

- i) To instruct officers to bring a paper to the next Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee on 19 October 2021 with the potential measures Moray Council could put in place to support communities with Gull problems along with costings.
- ii) That the leader and chief executive will write to the Scottish Government and local MSP's highlighting the concerns of local people and calling on them to consider a new funding package to support coastal communities who face Gull problems.

In his introduction, Councillor Eagle said that following discussions with other Councillors it had become clear that the Gull issue was not one only affecting coastal life but indeed most areas of Moray and agreed to remove the word coastal and replace with Moray wide.

In response, Councillor Leadbitter welcomed the motion. He further added that work has been ongoing in central Elgin to try and resolve the problem and it is hope that the expansion next year at the start of the nesting season will have a bigger impact. Councillor Leadbitter suggested amending the wording to include writing to the local MSP and MP as the protection of the seagulls is a reserved issue for Westminster.

Councillor Eagle confirmed he was happy with this change and as there was no one otherwise minded, the Council agreed to:

- i) To instruct Officers to bring a paper to the next Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee on 19 October 2021 with the potential measures Moray Council could put in place to support communities with Gull problems along with costings.
- ii) That the Leader and Chief Executive will write to the Scottish Government, the local MP and MSP's highlighting the concerns of local people and calling on them to consider a new funding package to support coastal communities who face Gull problems

## **7. Notice of Motion - Glasgow Food and Climate Declaration**

A Notice of Motion was submitted by Councillor Nicol, seconded by Councillor Coull and not Councillor Coy as indicated in the papers, in the following terms:

### **Glasgow Food and Climate Declaration**

Council notes the request made to the Council Leader by the Leader of Glasgow City Council to sign the Glasgow Food and Climate Declaration ahead of COP26 and join the commitment and call to action for a food systems approach to tackling the climate and nature emergency.

Council further notes that signatories include a range of sub-national governments and organisations from countries around the world and include a number of Scotland's Local Authorities.

Council notes that there are no significant financial implications to signing the declaration as actions already agreed as part of our Climate Change Strategy aim to deliver these benefits.

Council notes the information that can be found on the Glasgow declaration webpage at [www.glasgowdeclaration.org](http://www.glasgowdeclaration.org) and instructs the Council Leader to sign the Declaration, the text of which is detailed in Appendix 1.

Councillor Eagle confirmed that his group fully supported the Climate Change Strategy for Moray, however was concerned about the suggestion that there is no significant financial implications in signing the declaration and would it be possible to identify the likely costs.

In response Councillor Leadbitter said that there were not costs that had not already been identified by the Council within its own strategy. He further gave an assurance that he had asked Officer prior to the submission of the Notice of Motion who confirmed that any costs are encompassed in the strategy.

Councillor Brown sought clarification on whether the Notice of Motion was competent given there had been no costs included.

In response the Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance confirmed that in respect of Standing Order 47c it would be up to Members to determine whether they had sufficient information before them to come to a reasoned and balanced decision.

Councillor Feaver stated that she had no confidence in agreeing with the motion due to the financial costs not being identified and proposed amending the Notice of Motion to read that there are no financial implications.

The Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance confirmed that he felt Councillor Feaver's amendment was not achievable.

The Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) suggested that the wording could be amended to read there are no current direct financial implications.

Councillor Nicol confirmed that she would be happy to amend the wording to that suggested by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance).

It was agreed to have a short adjournment to allow parties to discuss what had been put forward.

On the resumption of the meeting, Councillor Feaver withdrew her amendment.

Councillor Brown, seconded by Councillor Feaver proposed that the Council rejects the request to sign the Glasgow Declaration on the grounds that there is no financial information on potential costs available to facilitate a reasoned judgement.

On the division there voted:

For the motion (14)	Councillors Nicol, Coull, Alexander, Bremner, Creswell, Cowe, Coy, Divers, Edwards, Leadbitter, A McLean, Morrison, Taylor and Warren.
For the Amendment (7)	Councillors Brown, Feaver, Allan, Gatt, M Mclean, Ross and Wilson.
Abstentions (3)	Councillors Eagle, Macrae and Powell.

Therefore the motion became the finding of the meeting and the Council agreed to sign the Declaration.

## **8. Notice of Motion - Pipes and Drums Tuition**

A Notice of Motion was submitted by Councillor Alexander, seconded by Councillor Creswell in the following terms:

### **Moray Tuition – Pipes and Drums**

In light of the proposed extra funding from the Scottish Government for music tuition in our schools, this motion calls for a report to the Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee detailing how the Council could include in its curriculum an inclusive and fully funded option for pupils to receive tuition in piping and drumming. Pipe bands are an integral part of our Scottish tradition and play a huge role in the attraction of tourists to our area. Many councils already include this choice in their curriculum and the Moray Council should pick up the baton and continue the sterling work that has already been started by the Moray Youth Pipes and Drums Tuition Scheme in conjunction the Scottish Schools Pipes and Drums Trust (SSPDT)

As there was no one otherwise minded the Council agreed for a report to be presented to the Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee.

## **9. Emergency Notice of Motion - Universal Credit Reduction**

A Notice of Motion was submitted by Councillor Coy, seconded by Councillor Leadbitter in the following terms:

### **UNIVERSAL CREDIT REDUCTION**

Due to the potential scale of the impact of the Universal Credit cut to Moray becoming clearer and the publication of the Citizens Advice Scotland report in the last week, the Council urgently notes with concern the reduction of £20 per week for the estimated 3150 Universal Credit claimants in Moray will mean a loss of income of over £1000 per year for Moray's most financially vulnerable families. As the Joseph Rowntree Foundation has stated: 'This will hit families on the lowest incomes and disproportionately affect families with children, particularly single parent families and families where someone is disabled.'

Council further notes that as the cost of food, clothing and energy continues to rise this council must do all it can to protect Moray's most financially vulnerable families.

Council acknowledges the pressure this cut will have on local 3rd sector organisations and council services like the Income Maximisation team and Welfare Benefits team.

Council instructs the Leader to write to the UK Government, the MP for Moray and the Secretary of State for Scotland with urgency to add our voices to the calls from the devolved governments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to rethink the plans to end the Universal Credit uplift on the 6th of October.

Councillor Eagle, seconded by Councillor Brown proposed not accepting the Notice of Motion as the uplift had always been a temporary measure when it was introduced.

Councillor Eagle further added that he would do all that he could to find out more information about the Shared Prosperity Fund and will circulate information to all Members for dissemination.

On the division there voted:

For the Motion (14)	Councillors Coy, Leadbitter, Alexander, Bremner, Coull, Cowe, Creswell, Divers, Edwards, A McLean, Morrison, Nicol, Taylor and Warren
For the Amendment (10)	Councillors Eagle, Brown, Allan, Feaver, Gatt, Macrae, M McLean, Powell, Ross and Wilson
Abstentions (0)	

Accordingly the motion became the finding of the meeting and the Council agreed to instruct the Leader to write to the UK Government, the MP for Moray and the

Secretary of State for Scotland with urgency to add voices to the calls from the devolved governments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to rethink the plans to end the Universal Credit uplift on the 6 October 2021.

In terms of Standing Order 75, the Chair sought the agreement of the Council to continue the meeting past 12.45pm to allow the next item on the agenda to be discussed. This was unanimously agreed.

## **10        Resettlement and Relocation Schemes**

A report by the Chief Officer, Health and Social Care sought approval to participate in the following Resettlement and Relocation Schemes and to subsequently advise the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA) of Moray Council's commitment towards:

- Afghanistan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP) Scheme (Emergency Response) to support Afghan Local Employed Staff (LES); and
- National Transfer Scheme to support Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children.

Councillor Eagle expressed concern that the dedicated resettlement team were only being employed on a temporary basis for a period of 12 months and was it possible for officers to investigate whether a cross area response with neighbouring authorities was appropriate.

In response, the Project Officer, Health and Social Care Moray updated the Council on guidance received since the report had been written which confirmed that funding is now available for 3 years and it is proposed to employ the resettlement team for a period of 2 years with a report back to the Council at the end of the 2 years.

Councillor Morrison further added that an approach from Aberdeenshire Council had already been received and assured Councillor Eagle that cross authority working was already taking place.

Following further consideration Councillor Eagle seconded by Councillor Brown, moved that the Council to consider amending recommendation 2.1 (iv) to read - agrees to allocate funding for a dedicated resettlement team for 24 months and to ask Officers to contact other authorities to determine if there is a possibility of a cross area response and for a paper to be brought back in 2 years reporting on the scheme.

As there was no one otherwise minded the Council agreed to:

- i) participate in the Afghan Relocation Scheme;
- ii) participate in the National Transfer Scheme for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children;
- iii) note the Council's position in respect of the current and future Resettlement Schemes;
- iv) to allocate funding for a dedicated resettlement team for 24 months and to ask Officers to contact other authorities to determine if there is a possibility



of a cross area response and for a paper to be brought back in 2 years reporting on the scheme.

- v) delegate authority to the Head of Housing and Property to negotiate and agree terms for the lease of Ministry of Defence (MOD) housing stock; and
- vi) note the precedent for any allocations of social housing under related schemes to be made by the Housing Needs Review Group.

Councillor Wilson left the meeting during the consideration of this item.

## **11. Order of Business**

In respect of Standing Order 28, the Chair sought agreement from the Council to consider Item 28 in confidence following the break for lunch then return to the open section of the agenda and consider Items 15 and 24 before resuming with the agenda order.

This was unanimously agreed.

## **12. North Infrastructure Commission [Para 6, 8 and 9]**

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) invited the Council to consider the work of the North Infrastructure Commission (NIC), its Key Findings Report of July 2021 and the accompanying North Infrastructure Investment Plan (NIIP).

Following consideration the Council agreed to:

- i) note the work undertaken by the North Infrastructure Commission (NIC) since its launch in 2020;
- ii) endorses the findings of the NIC in its draft Key Findings Report (Executive Summary attached as Appendix 1, noting the intention to take this forward for wider Government consultation as detailed in the report; and
- iii) inclusion of the projects for Moray in the 15 year North Infrastructure Investment Plan (NIIP) as set out in Appendix 2.

## **13. Member Conduct**

Councillor Ross raised concerns about the behaviours and conduct of some Members during the morning session of the meeting.

In response, the Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance confirmed that he was aware that several members had raised issues with the conduct of other members during the morning session. He further added that he would undertake to review the webcast to see where conduct had fallen short in accordance with the Code of Conduct and advised that to progress with the meeting it would be advisable to draw a line and try to move on with the meeting.

#### **14. Improvement and Modernisation Raising Attainment Wellbeing**

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) sought direction on the next stage of development of the Education workstream in relation to Raising Attainment: Wellbeing agreed by the Council on 12 May 2021 as part of the next stage of the Council's Improvement and Modernisation programme: Transformation to Achieve.

Councillor Warren proposed to allocate £1,996,000 worth of funding to ensure the Council is doing the best it can for its young people, this was seconded by Councillor A McLean.

Councillor Brown, seconded by Councillor Feaver moved to allocate £1,038,000 worth of funding.

On the division there voted:

For the Motion (12)	Councillors Warren, A McLean, Alexander, Coull, Cowe, Coy, Creswell, Divers, Leadbitter, Nicol, Morrison and Taylor
For the Amendment (10)	Councillors Brown, Feaver, Allan, Eagle, Gatt, Macrae, M McLean, Powell, Ross and Wilson
Abstentions (0)	

Accordingly the motion became the finding of the meeting and the Council agreed to allocate £1,996,00 of funding to proceed to the next stage of development of the Raising Attainment: Wellbeing workstream within the Council's Improvement and Modernisation Programme.

Councillor Edwards left the meeting during the consideration of this item.

Councillor Allan left the meeting following the consideration of this item.

#### **15. Education National Improvement Framework Report and Plan**

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) advised the Council on the National Improvement Framework plan return which is submitted to the Scottish Government as requested, in September this year as opposed to the normal August return date.

Following consideration the Council agreed to:

- i) note the contents of the Moray Self-evaluation document and National Improvement Framework Plan; and
- ii) agrees the annual National Improvement Framework (NIF) return to be submitted to Scottish Government by 30 September 2021.

## **16. Independent Review of Adult Social Care and National Care Service Consultation**

A report by the Chief Executive (Moray Council) and the Chief Officer (Health and Social Care Moray) informed the Council of the current situation with respect to the Independent Review of Adult Social Care (IRASC) and the consultation on establishing a National Care Service (NCS) and for the Council to consider how it will respond to the consultation.

In terms of Standing Order 75 the Chair sought agreement from the Council to continue the meeting past 5.00pm. This was unanimously agreed.

There was a general consensus that all Councillors should be involved in the consultation response as it was important that as many views are presented as possible.

Councillor Brown proposed arranging a Members Briefing and facilitated session to obtain the views of all Councillors followed by a smaller working group to pull together all the views and to draft the Council's response.

Councillor Morrison however, expressed concern that this could double the work and felt the approach being taken by the Integration Joint Board in holding 1 facilitated session would be sufficient.

The Chief Executive and Chief Officer confirmed that this approach could be accommodated. The Working group could be formed from the facilitated group, if it was required. He further added that if there was a clear response from the facilitated session then there would be no requirement for the working group.

In terms of Standing Order 75 the Chair sought agreement from the Council to continue the meeting after 5.00pm. This was unanimously agreed.

Following further consideration the Chair moved the recommendations with the addition of a caveat that if required a smaller working group would be convened following the facilitated session.

As there was no one otherwise minded the Council agreed to note the content of the report on the IRASC and NCS consultation and for arrangements to be made for a facilitated session for all Members to discuss the consultation and formulate a response, with the option to follow up with a working group if necessary.

## **17. Resumption of the Meeting - 20 September 2021**

### **PRESENT**

Councillor George Alexander, Councillor James Allan, Councillor David Bremner, Councillor Frank Brown, Councillor Theresa Coull, Councillor John Cowe, Councillor Gordon Cowie, Councillor Paula Coy, Councillor Lorna Creswell, Councillor John Divers, Councillor Tim Eagle, Councillor Ryan Edwards, Councillor Claire Feaver, Councillor Donald Gatt, Councillor Graham Leadbitter, Councillor Marc Macrae, Councillor Aaron McLean, Councillor Maria McLean, Councillor Ray McLean, Councillor Shona Morrison, Councillor Louise Nicol, Councillor Laura Powell, Councillor Derek Ross, Councillor Amy Taylor, Councillor Sonya Warren, Councillor Walter Wilson

## **APOLOGIES**

Councillor Frank Brown and Councillor Clare Feaver

## **ALSO IN ATTENDANCE**

Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance), Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development), Chief Financial Officer, Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance, Payments Manager, Asset Management Co-ordinator and Mrs Lissa Rowan, Committee Services Officer as Clerk to the Meeting.

### **18. Declaration of Group Decisions and Members Interests**

In terms of Standing Order 20 and the Councillors' Code of Conduct, Councillor Morrison declared an interest in Item 25a) Appointments to Outside Bodies being a Member of the Moray Integration Joint Board.

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 other declarations of Member's interests in respect of any item on the agenda.

### **19. 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 27 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.

<b>Para Number of the Minute</b>	<b>Para Number of Schedule 7A</b>
35	Para 6 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person(s)

### **20. Order of Business**

In terms of Standing Order 28, the Chair sought the agreement of the Council to vary the order of business and take Item 21 "2020 - 2021 Procurement Annual Report" as the second substantive item of business, to allow the Payments Manager to leave the meeting at the earliest convenience. This was agreed.

### **21. Monitoring Officer Report from 1 August 2020 to 31 July 2021**

Councillor M McLean joined the meeting during consideration of this item.

A report by the Monitoring Officer provided the Council with a report on the range of activities undertaken by the Monitoring Officer.

During his introduction, the Monitoring Officer advised that this report had originally been an information report however, due to the amount of time spent by the Monitoring Officer with regard to Notices of Motion and incidences of disrespectful behaviour, he was of the view that the report should be added to the agenda for consideration by the Council. He advised that disrespectful behaviour damaged the Council's reputation and hindered the Council's progress in achieving its strategic priorities.

The Council Leader further stated that Councillors should conduct themselves in a way that gives the public confidence in the Council and that since the meeting last week, some Councillors had been contacted by members of the public commenting that the conduct by some Members at the last meeting of the Council was unreasonable and that each Member should consider how their words and actions may be interpreted by others and urged Members to debate matters using a more calm and reasoned approach.

Thereafter, the Council agreed to note the Monitoring Officer Report from 1 August 2020 to 31 July 2021.

## **22. 2020 - 2021 Procurement Annual Report**

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) provided the Council with an update report on Procurement activity in Moray and in particular report on procurement performance for 2020/2021.

The Council joined the Chair in commending the Service for their efforts given the challenging circumstance surrounding the Covid 19 pandemic and thereafter agreed to note the overall procurement performance for 2020/21 as set out in the Annual Report in Appendix 1 and in Section 4 of the report.

## **23. Overview of Moray Council Strategic Priorities**

A report by the Chief Executive provided the Council with an overview of progress of the Council's strategic priorities.

Following consideration, the Council:

- i) agreed to note progress of the corporate and strategic priorities as set out in the Council's key strategic plans and programme;
- ii) agreed to note the required investment in time and in the replenishment and enhancement of strategic and associated capacity and capability to deliver the priorities; and
- iii) recognised that, to maintain pace, depth and continuity of improvement and transformation, given the interplay and dependencies of the strategic plans and programme and the significance of workload balance, an agility of resource allocation and a proportionate risk based approach is required.

## **24. Corporate Plan Progress Update 2020-21**

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) invited the Committee to review progress made during 2020-21 on the 2019-24 Corporate Plan.

Following consideration, the Council agreed to note the progress made during 2020-21 on the Corporate Plan 2019-24 as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

## **25. Best Value Assurance Report Strategic Action Plan - Progress Report**

Councillor Eagle left the meeting at this juncture.

Under reference to paragraph 18 of the Minute of the meeting of Moray Council dated 28 October 2021, a report by the Chief Executive informed the Council of the latest progress on the Best Value Assurance Report Strategic Action Plan.

Following consideration, the Council agreed to note:

- i) progress made on the Best Value Assurance Report (BVAR) Strategic Action Plan as set out in the Appendix to the report; and
- ii) that future progress will be reported on a quarterly basis.

## **26. Strategic Framework for Recovery and Renewal in Moray Update Report**

Councillor R McLean left the meeting during consideration of this item.

Under reference to paragraph 8 of the Minute of the Moray Council dated 18 February 2021, a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) provided an update on progress with recovery, noting that the last overarching update report was provided to the Council on 18 February 2021.

During discussion, the Council Leader made reference to recent comments that had been made by the Vice Chair of the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) regarding the variety of courses that should be provided and sought the agreement of the Council to write to the UHI to seek clarification with regard to these comments in relation to the curriculum breadth and how this links to economic and education recovery. This was unanimously agreed.

Thereafter, the Council agreed:

- i) to note the update on key developments at a national level;
- ii) to note the broad update on local activity and developments across the 4 harms;
- iii) to note the update on progress with the Recovery and Renewal Action Plan (RRAP) as set out in Appendix 1 of the report and lessons learned;

- iv) to note the progress in terms of the Recovery and Renewal Programme as set out in Appendix 2 of the report and agreed the reprofiling now proposed; and
- v) that the Council Leader will write to the University of the Highlands and Islands to seek clarification with regard to recent comments in relation to the curriculum breadth and how this links to economic and education recovery.

## **27. Short Medium Term Financial Planning**

Under reference to paragraph 17 of the Minute of the meeting of Moray Council dated 30 June 2021, a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) informed the Council of the updated financial projections for 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24 and asked that the Council consider the approach to development of the revenue budget for 2021/22 and 2022/23.

The Council joined the Chair in commending the Service for their clarity in reporting the complex financial information surrounding Covid-19 money and grants and thereafter agreed:

- i) to note the revised budget estimates for 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24;
- ii) to note the continued underlying requirement to deliver savings;
- iii) that the focus during 2021/22 and 2022/23 should be on service redesign and realignment, delivering efficiencies in the short term (within 12-36 months) rather than on immediate in year savings and should include consideration of budget pressures from external influence;
- iv) to approve the use of covid ear-marked reserves as set out in paragraph 3.3 of the report;
- v) to approve further ear-marking of free general reserve as set out in paragraph 3.12 of the report; and
- vi) to approve additional funding of £75,000 in 2021/22 for Social Care services in response to a recently identified urgent requirement for support for a vulnerable person.

## **28. Treasury Management Performance Indicators**

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) provided the Council with the annual outturn report on Treasury Management and details of the Council's Prudential Indicators for Treasury Management and Capital Investment for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Following consideration, the Council agreed to note the Treasury Management Performance and the Council's Treasury Management and Capital Investment Prudential Indicators for 2020/21 as set out in Appendix 2 of the report.

## **29. Financial Reserves Policy**

Under reference to paragraph 4 of the Minute of the meeting of Moray Council dated 31 October 2018, a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) sought approval of the Council's updated financial reserves policy.

During her introduction, the Chief Financial Officer advised that when she had written the report the earlier report which had been agreed by the Council on Short to Medium Term Financial Planning which included approval of reserves in relation to Moray Growth Deal had yet to be considered and asked that the Council consider approval of the revised Financial Reserves Policy subject to the inclusion of the ear marking of reserves in relation to the Moray Growth Deal. This was agreed.

Thereafter, the Council agreed:

- i) to approve the Financial Reserves Policy as set out in Appendix 1 of the report subject to the inclusion of the ear marking of reserves in relation to the Moray Growth Deal; and
- ii) that the next review will be no later than October 2024.

## **30 North Highland and Moray Local Space Leadership Group**

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) invited the Council to nominate a Member to participate in the North Highland and Moray Local Space Leadership Group.

The Chair nominated the Council Leader, recognising his wealth of experience gained from being Chair of the Economic Development and Infrastructure Services Committee and also his particular interest in aerospace. This was seconded by Councillor Coy.

There being no-one otherwise minded, the Council agreed the terms of reference for the group and nominated Councillor Leadbitter to be considered for representation on the Local Space Leadership Group.

## **31. Forres Common Good - Transition Town Forres**

Under reference to paragraph 21 of the Minute of the meeting of Moray Council dated 30 June 2021, a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) invited the Council to consider an application from Transition Town Forres to the Forres Common Good Fund for financial assistance.

Councillor Aaron McLean highlighted the good work undertaken by Transition Town Forres and how this supports the Council's climate change strategy and encourages sustainable communities and moved that the Council approve the application from Transition Town Forres for a grant of £8,000 from the Forres Common Good Fund. This was seconded by Councillor Nicol.

There being no-one otherwise minded, the Council agreed to approve an application from Transition Town Forres for a grant of £8,000 from the Forres Common Good Fund.



### **32. Committee Governance**

Under reference to paragraph 24 of the Minute of the meeting of Moray Council dated 30 June 2021, a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) invited the Council to approve the changes to the Scheme of Administration to reflect the agreed revised committee structure along with those changes previously agreed that would normally be incorporated as part of the annual review and agree the revised Committee Calendar.

During his introduction, the Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance highlighted 2 errors in the revised Scheme of Administration, that being reference (E) (21) which had been duplicated in error and the removal of the word "culture" from reference (F) (34) and advised that these errors would be corrected should the Scheme of Administration be approved. This was noted.

With regard to the recommendation to appoint a Depute Chair to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Ross nominated Councillor Brown, stating that, although Councillor Brown was not present at the meeting, he had discussed this with Councillor Brown prior to the meeting. This was seconded by Councillor Wilson.

There being no-one otherwise minded, the Council agreed:

- i) the changes to the Scheme of Administration to reflect the revised committee structure as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, and also to incorporate all other changes normally incorporated as part of the annual review subject to the removal of:
  - (E) (21) which had been duplicated in error; and
  - the word "culture" from (F) (34);
- ii) that a report clarifying the role of Audit and Scrutiny (with reference a scrutiny guidance document) will be presented to a future meeting;
- iii) that existing committee chairs continue in their positions with the Chair of Policy and Resources assuming the chair of the Corporate Committee;
- iv) to appoint Councillor Brown as Depute Chair to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee;
- v) the revised committee calendar covering an 8 week cycle of meetings commencing 28 September 2021 as set out in Appendix 3 of the report; and
- vi) that meetings continue to be held by video conference and webcast and the position is reviewed again at the Council meeting in January 2022.

### **33. Appointments to Outside Bodies**

Councillor Gatt joined the meeting during consideration of this item.

Under reference to paragraph 7 of the Minute of the meeting of Moray Council dated 17 May 2017, a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education,

Communities and Organisational Development) invited the Council to confirm the re-appointment of Councillors Brown and Morrison to the Moray Integration Joint Board (MIJB) until the end of the current term of office.

Councillor Edwards moved the recommendation that the Council approve the re-appointment of Councillors Brown and Morrison to the Moray Integration Joint Board (MIJB) until the end of the current term of office. This was seconded by Councillor Coull.

There being no-one otherwise minded, the Council agreed to approve the re-appointment of Councillors Brown and Morrison to the Moray Integration Joint Board (MIJB) until the end of the current term of office.

### **34. Question Time \*\*\***

At the meeting of Moray Council on 15 September 2021, Councillor Eagle had indicated that he had a question under reference to paragraph 6 of the Minute date 30 June 2021 in relation to the Findochty Harbour which he would raise at item 26 Question Time.

As Councillor Eagle was not present at this point in the meeting, the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) provided the following update for members using the meeting chat function:

Findochty pontoons – construction in progress in line with the timeline that has been communicated out. The contractor is on-site doing preparation and assembly – 4 beams have been fitted at low tides and 6 pontoon sections are constructed on the quayside. Programme indicates completion for 3 November, and the contractor is currently on track for this. Arrangements for harbour users to bring their boats back in to the water will be made in the coming weeks.

Councillor Alexander sought an update in relation to the installation of traffic lights at St Catherines Road and Orchard Road in Forres as he had heard that the works scheduled for October 2021 may now be postponed.

In response, the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) advised that a full update on the proposed installation of traffic lights at St Catherines Road and Orchard Road in Forres would be provided to all member in due course.

Councillor Ross queried whether there were any plans to reduce the HQ campus as members of staff would not be returning to council offices on a full time basis and that the buildings are currently under-utilised.

In response, the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) advised that a report on the office review was recently considered by Council and that there were no current plans to reduce the HQ campus. She advised that recruitment to the project team for the Improvement and Modernisation Programme was underway which would take office rationalisation forward and that, although moves were being made toward 30% occupancy by November 2021, the benefits of face to face working as part of a team, training for new members of staff and the use of IT only available at HQ buildings had to be considered as these elements are hindered through remote working. The Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) further advised that potential rationalisation of satellite buildings where lease agreements are coming to an end are being

considered in relation to whether these members of staff can be accommodated in the HQ Campus.

Councillor Creswell made reference to Challenge Poverty week due to commence at the start of October and sought an update in relation to the Council's status with regard to providing the real living wage.

In response, the Chief Executive advised that Council Officers had participated in a video commissioned by one of the Poverty Alliance Groups displaying the views of the public and private sectors which is to be shown during National Poverty Week. He further advised that the Council is working with the Local Poverty Alliance with regard to the real living wage with an estimated date of March 2022 for completion of the exercise.

### **35. Glenlivet Estate Masterplan [Para 6]**

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) invited the Council to nominate Members to participate in the Glenlivet masterplan steering group and advisory group and sought funding to support the project.

Councillor Wilson nominated Councillor Ross to participate in the steering group. This was seconded by Councillor Edwards.

There being no-one otherwise minded, the Council agreed to:

- i) approve, in principle, £10k from reserves in 2021/22 and £10k for 2022/23 towards a share of the cost of providing the Glenlivet masterplan subject to equivalent amounts being allocated by Cairngorms National Park and Highlands and Islands Enterprise;
- ii) to nominate Councillor Ross to participate in the steering group; and
- iii) nominate the 3 local members ie Councillors Nicol, Ross and Wilson to participate in the advisory group.