

MORAY COUNCIL

Minute of Meeting of the Moray Council Emergency Cabinet

Wednesday, 24 June 2020

Various Locations via Video-conference ,

PRESENT

Councillor George Alexander, Councillor Frank Brown, Councillor John Cowe, Councillor John Divers, Councillor Tim Eagle, Councillor Graham Leadbitter, Councillor Shona Morrison, Councillor Derek Ross

APOLOGIES

Councillor Donald Gatt

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 and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer.

1. Chair

The meeting was chaired by Councillor Shona Morrison.

The Chair informed the Emergency Cabinet that following the Scottish Governments announcement on 23 June 2020 item 3 on the agenda, the Education Recovery Planning Report had been withdrawn from the agenda.

2. Declaration of Group Decisions and Members Interests *

In terms of Standing Order 20 and the Councillor's 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. Strategic Framework for Recovery and Renewal in Moray

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) reported on the strategic approach proposed for corporate planning and delivery of the recovery and renewal phase in Moray in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

During discussion of the report, Councillor Brown stated that the Conservative Group did not agree with the governance proposals as stated in recommendation

2.1(v) and wanted to ensure that the depth of knowledge of all 26 Councillors should be used to inform and influence progress. He further added that the 7 members of the Emergency Cabinet do not represent political balance.

Councillor Brown proposed amending recommendation 2.1(v) to read - agrees that Elected Members nominated by Group Leaders engage with Officers on the different work streams to influence and inform the recover renewal programme. This was seconded by Councillor Eagle.

In response, Councillor Leadbitter said that he felt the Emergency Cabinet has worked well and offers full flexibility as members can substitute for each other dependent on the report topics. He further added that the governance already exists for the Emergency Cabinet and was unsure as to Councillor Brown's proposal.

The Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance advised that he had concerns in terms of Standing Order 47 that Councillor Brown's amendment was not competent.

Following consideration and in discussion with Councillor Eagle, Councillor Brown withdrew his amendment and said that they would come back with a more precise proposal.

The Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance confirmed that if an amendment was not put forward then the 6 month rule would come into effect for any future proposals, or there would need to be a suspension of standing orders.

In response, Councillor Brown said he was happy to withdraw his amendment.

Following consideration the Emergency Cabinet agreed:

- i) to note the process used to develop the draft Strategic Framework for Recover and Renewal in Moray along with associated documents in Appendices 1 - 3;
- ii) to consult, engage and involve the community, aims, outcomes and principles proposed in the Strategic Framework as set out in the report;

the staged programme set out in the Appendix 1, this to be subject to quarterly
- iii) review and re-iteration as processes for recovery and renewal continue to develop at a national and sectoral level;
- iv) to note the high level process being used to plan for effective operational recovery of services in line with national guidance; and

that members of the Emergency Cabinet will act as a working group to inform
- v) and influence progress with regular updates to the Council and workstream updates to relevant committees.

4. Question Time ***

Councillor Ross sought clarification on whether there is any money from the Scottish Government forthcoming to assist with the back to schools programme.

In response Councillor Leadbitter confirmed that the formula used to distribute funding is not a Scottish Government formula but is agreed by COSLA. He assured Councillor Ross that he continues to raise issues of funding with the Scottish Government and COSLA and will continue to do that.

The Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) further added that many of the funds mentioned by Councillor Ross are allocated on poverty indicators and as Members will know rural poverty is difficult to reflect and areas like Moray do not attract a lot of such funding.

Councillor Eagle asked whether work is being done within the Council's Sports and Leisure facilities to ensure that they are in a good position when the announcement is made that the Council can look at re-opening them.

In response, the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) confirmed that a range of work including risk assessments is being carried out in the background working towards the recovery and renewal in Moray to allow the re-opening of leisure facilities when allowed.

Councillor Alexander requested that the newly re-named Forres Credit Union, now Moray Firth Credit Union is widely promoted by all Elected Members. During the current period the Credit Union has supported many vulnerable citizens in Forres. He further asked that Moray Council provide some support to the Credit Union.

In response the Chief Executive confirmed that he had heard about the expansion today and assured Councillor Alexander that this was a piece of interrupted business that had been affected by the lockdown and the business will need to be picked up again along with a number of other items which have been affected by the current situation.