

MORAY COUNCIL

Minute of Meeting of the Moray Council

Wednesday, 23 February 2022

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 Gordon Cowie, Councillor Lorna Creswell, Councillor John Divers, Councillor Ryan Edwards, Councillor Claire Feaver, Councillor Donald Gatt, Councillor Graham Leadbitter, Councillor Marc Macrae, Councillor Aaron McLean, Councillor Ray McLean, Councillor Shona Morrison, Councillor Louise Nicol, Councillor Laura Powell, Councillor Derek Ross, Councillor Amy Taylor, Councillor Sonya Warren

APOLOGIES

Councillor Tim Eagle, Councillor Maria McLean, 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, Children's and Leisure Services), Chief Officer, Health and Social Care Moray, Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance, Head of Financial Services, Head of Housing and Property, Head of HR, ICT and Organisational Development, Acting Head of Children, Families and Justice Social Work, Chief Social Work Officer and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer.

1. Chair

The meeting was chaired by Councillor Shona Morrison.

2. Declaration of Group Decisions and Members Interests *

In terms of Standing Order 20 and the Councillors' Code of Conduct, Councillors Brown, Coull, Divers, Edwards, Morrison, Nicol and Warren declared an interest in Items 6, 11 and 12 on the agenda as members of the Moray Integration Joint Board.

There were no other 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. 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 Items 11 to 14 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.

Para Number of the Minute	Para Number of Schedule 7a
11	Para 1 Information relating to staffing matters
12	Para 1 Information relating to staffing matters
13	Para 9 Information on terms proposed or to be proposed by or to the Authority
14	Para 12 Information relating to instructions to counsel any opinion of counsel and any advice received, information obtained or action to be taken in connection with legal procedures.

4. Minute of Meeting of 19 January 2022

The minute of the meeting of the Moray Council dated 19 January 2022 was submitted and approved.

5. Written Questions **

The Council noted that no written questions had been submitted.

6. Revenue Budget Monitoring Quarter 3

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) advised the Council of the revenue budget monitoring position to 31 December 2021 and of the current estimated out-turn for 2021/22.

In introducing the report the Head of Financial Services updated the Council on the estimated outturn of the Moray Integration Joint Board since the report was written. The report states an overspend however the outturn is now anticipated to be an underspend of £217,000 and she felt it prudent to update the Council on the change.

Following consideration the Council agreed to note:

- i) the budget monitoring position of £1,189,000 under budget for 2021/22 as at 31 December 2021;
- ii) that this position consists of an underspend on Devolved School Budgets of £1,217,000, an underspend of £1,479,000 on Children's Services, an overspend on Social Care Services delivered on behalf of the Moray Integration Joint Board (MIH+JB) of £1,928,000 and an underspend on other services of £421,000;
- iii) movement of £3,212,000 in the General Revenue Grant, as detailed in paragraph 3.5;

- iv) the current estimated out-turn for 2021/22 of an underspend of £2,132,000 which would result in an increase in Council reserves; and
- v) emerging budget pressures as summarised in paragraph 6.1

7. Capital Plan 2021-22

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) advised the Council of the expenditure to 31 December 2021 under the capital plan for financial year 2021/22 and of estimates of projected expenditure profiled into quarters.

Following consideration the Council agreed to:

- i) note expenditure to 31 December 2021 of £17,925,000;
- ii) note the current projected expenditure of £42,502,000 for 2021/22 profiled into quarters, as set out in Appendix 1 and that this should be treated as a maximum spend, given the level of spend to date, the low level of confidence in spend to budget for much of the capital plan, and the continuing disruption caused by the omicron variant;
- iii) notes 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 this report.

8. Funding for Development of the Raising Attainment

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) sought approval for the allocation of funding from reserves to appoint a specialist ICT Education consultancy to assist Officers to progress the Raising Attainment: Curriculum Breadth and Digital Workstream within the Council's Improvement and Modernisation Programme.

Following consideration the Council agreed to allocate up to £50,000 from earmarked reserves for Council priorities, for the appointment of a specialist ICT Education consultancy, following the approval by the Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee on 26 January 2022 of the recommendations in the report at Appendix A.

9. Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report 2020-21

A report by the Chief Social Work Officer informed the Council of the annual report of the Chief Social Work Officer on the statutory work undertaken on the Council's behalf during the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 inclusive.

Councillor Gatt asked whether it would be possible for future reports to split the workforce figures between Children and Adult Social Work. In response, the Chief Social Work Officer confirmed that this would be possible.

Following consideration the Council agreed to note the contents of the report.

10. Question Time ***

Under reference to paragraph 20 of the minute of the meeting of Moray Council on 19 January 2022, Councillor Gatt sought an update on when he would receive a response to his question regarding the Keith Tourist Office.

In response, the Head of Housing and Property apologised for the delay and confirmed that Officers were currently working on the response and it would be sent to Councillor Gatt within in the next couple of days.

Councillor Gatt thanked the Head of Housing and Property for his response but asked that it be noted that he was disappointed the response was taking so long to be received.

11. Regrading of Post of Chief Financial Officer (MIJB)

A report by the Chief Executive asked the Council to approve the increase in salary grade for the post of Chief Financial Officer (Moray Integrated Joint Board) and consequent increase to the Council's Chief Officer establishment.

Following consideration the Council agreed to approve the regrading of the post of Chief Financial Officer (MIJB) from salary grade 13 (£59,490 - £65,126) to Chief Officer Point 30 (currently £82,340) with effect from 1 March 2022.

12. Children's Services Transformation Proposals

A report by the Chief Officer, Health and Social Care Moray sought approval from the Council to approve the extension to the post of Interim Head of Children, Families and Justice Services and for the creation of a Service Manager post at Grade 13, following on from the Transformational Change Proposals agreed on 26 January 2022 at Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee (ECLS) (Appendix 1).

Following consideration Councillor Brown, seconded by Councillor Warren moved to agree the recommendations. As there was no one otherwise minded the Council agreed to:

- i) a 6 month extension to the Interim Head of Children, Families and Justice Services post;
- ii) approve and support the re-investment of savings from the social work budget to allow for the creation of an additional Service Manager post at Grade 13 to ensure sustainable, safe, robust services to children and families; and
- iii) note the wider transformation proposals agreed by ECLS Committee on 26 January 2022 (Appendix 1).

13. Moray Affordable Housing Programme - Council Land Aquisition

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) asked the Council to agree to purchase sites at South Glassgreen, Elgin and Speyview, Aberlour for development of new Council housing.

The Head of Housing and Property confirmed that since the report had been written the District Valuer's Valuation had now been received.

Following consideration the Council agreed to:

- i) purchase the sites detailed in Section 5, at a purchase price which does not exceed the District Valuer's valuation; and
- ii) remit the Legal Services Manager to conclude the purchase of the sites.

14. Living Wage Consolidation

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) asked the Council to approve the recommendation to progress to formal consultation with the Trades Unions and employees on proposals for a revised pay and grading structure that achieves consolidation of the Scottish Local Government Living Wage and to see formal approval for the implementation of these proposals should the formal consultation be favourable.

Following consideration the Council agreed:

- i) to note that agreement has been reached with the recognised Trade Unions on a preferred revised pay and grading structure for consultation;
- ii) to progress to formal consultation with the Trade Unions on Option 3A for a revised pay and grading structure with proposed implementation date of 1 April 2021;
- iii) that if a collective agreement is reached following consultation that arrangements are made for implementation and the outcome is reported to a future meeting of the Council for information; and
- iv) agree that should there be no agreement following consultation, a report will be brought back to the Corporate Committee to consider next steps.