

# MORAY COUNCIL

## Minute of Meeting of the Economic Development and Infrastructure Services Committee

Tuesday, 19 October 2021

various locations via video-conference,

### **PRESENT**

Councillor Theresa Coull, Councillor John Cowe, Councillor Gordon Cowie, Councillor John Divers, Councillor Tim Eagle, Councillor Graham Leadbitter, Councillor Marc Macrae, Councillor Maria McLean, Councillor Ray McLean, Councillor Amy Taylor, Councillor Sonya Warren

### **APOLOGIES**

Councillor David Bremner, Councillor Claire Feather, Councillor Walter Wilson

### **IN ATTENDANCE**

Also in attendance at the above meeting were: Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance), Head of Environmental and Commercial Services, Head of Economic Growth and Development, Transportation Manager, Head of Housing and Property Services, Estates Manager, Senior Officer Economic Strategy and Development, Principal Climate Change Strategy Officer, Energy Officer, Legal Services Manager and Democratic Services Manager as Clerk to the Committee.

### **1 Chair**

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

### **2 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.

### **3 Matters Arising**

Update on Action to be taken in respect of Seagulls

Under reference to para 6 of the Minute of the meeting of Moray Council dated 15 September 2021 the Chair stated that at that meeting in response to a Notice of Motion about Gulls, it had been agreed that a report on potential measures that could be put in place to support Communities with gull problems along with

costings would be brought to this meeting. However due to the pressures relating to finalising the Growth Deal, officers have understandably been committed to that as a priority resulting in the work required for the report on the gull problems being delayed. He further stated that he had sought an assurance that a delay in getting a report to the December meeting of this committee and thereafter a referral to full council would not impact on any modification to the contract with the egg and nest removal supplier for the next nesting season, should that be required. This assurance had been given and both the mover and seconder of the motion were satisfied with that.

#### Kinloss Barracks

The Chair referred to the recent reports on social media and the press regarding the potential threat to Kinloss Barracks as a result of ongoing restructuring of the British Army. He stated that whilst they are speculative at present, the reports do have a certain amount of credibility and as a consequence of that his intention would be to call an extraordinary meeting of the Moray Economic Partnership to discuss the issue and ensure that we are well prepared if this does transpire and ready for every eventuality. He further stated that he will also be seeking a meeting with both Highland and Edinburgh City Councils who have been identified as having bases, Fort George and Redford Barracks respectively in order to be as prepared as possible should a case be needed.

### **4 Order of Business**

Under reference to Standing Order 28, the Meeting agreed to vary the order of business as set down on the agenda and take Item 6 'Climate Change Strategy Update', Item 8 'Routemap to Community Wealth Building Strategy and Deliver and Item 9' Supplier Development Programme Membership' as the last items of business respectively in order to allow the Head of Economic Growth and Development to join the meeting later following his attendance at an urgent Growth Deal meeting.

### **5 Minute of Meeting of the Economic Growth, Housing and Environmental Sustainability Committee dated 24 August 2021**

The Minute of the meeting of the Economic Growth, Housing and Environmental Sustainability Committee dated 24 August 2021 was submitted and approved.

### **6 Written Questions**

The Committee noted that no written questions had been submitted.

### **7 Emergency Notice of Motion - Pedestrian Crossing - Elgin**

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

This notice of motion is submitted as an emergency given the emerging concerns being raised by local residents and parents connected with Bishopmill Primary School in Elgin and the installation of a new road crossing on Morrision Road, Elgin.

Over the last few weeks local people have raised concerns about the installation of a pedestrian crossing on Morrision Road near to Elgin Academy. Works are due to be completed soon in Elgin Academy Car Park which relate to the crossing earmarked to be installed next year.

Residents have raised concerns about limited consultation and have highlighted that the crossing would be much better placed at Bishopmill Primary given the quantity of young people crossing there and the number of houses at that end of Morrision Road.

We recognise the concerns being made by local people but following significant discussion also recognise the particular reasons the council have chosen this location.

Given the high level of public concerns and the technical aspects of these works, we therefore bring this motion to committee to give councillors an opportunity to ask questions on this development, to seek reassurance on the chosen location and the next steps for discussion with the community and Bishopmill Primary School.

Councillor Eagle outlined the terms of his Notice of Motion and stated that the emergency notice of motion had been submitted in response to the ongoing public concern about the installation of a pedestrian crossing on Morrision Road, Elgin and the responsibility the Council had to respond to public concern when it arises, especially when it interacts with child health and safety in relation to children crossing that road when going to school. He further stated that he was looking for discussion on the history behind the decision on the placing of the crossing at the particular location on Morrision Road that will allow Members to ask questions in order to be satisfied that all has been done to be assured that this crossing is being placed in the right location. He stated that the parents of pupils attending Bishopmill Primary School have raised concerns in relation to road safety at the primary school in light of the removal of school crossing patrollers, the fact that it is a very busy road and that the placing of a crossing should be closer to the primary school and he hoped that this could be clarified through the debate today.

The Transportation Manager advised that she fully understood the concerns raised by the parents of pupils at Bishopmill Primary School and of their concerns in relation to the road safety of the children crossing a busy road and why they would prefer to see any pedestrian crossing facility sited closer to the school. She advised that when looking to site a pedestrian crossing there are nationally established criteria which have to be followed that cover a wide range of factors including the volume of vehicles on the road, the number of pedestrians as well as a wide range of engineering factors such as proximity of accesses, sight lines, queuing and connections to the strategic network.

She advised that the Transportation Team had considered whether the crossing could be sited closer to the primary school, however the final assessment of the criteria meant that the proposed siting on Morrision Road was the only viable option. In relation to making that decision she advised that what hadn't been done was to carefully and properly engage with the primary school community in advance and for that she apologised and accepted that this had caused a great deal of concern. She further advised that in terms of the current status of the proposal within this financial year, some enabling works have been undertaken at Elgin Academy and the siting of the crossing will take place during the next

financial year and therefore in response to the concerns raised it had been agreed to take a step back to allow for greater engagement with the school community in the intervening period both about the proposal to put the crossing in and also what can be done to work with the school community about the road safety concerns crossing Morriston Road. In regards to the funding she advised that this was ring fenced funding relating to cycling and walking facilities.

Thereafter following further discussion during which the option relating to zebra crossings and the complexities surrounding this were discussed, the Committee agreed to note:

- i. the terms of the Emergency Notice of Motion in relation to the emerging concerns raised by local residents and parents connected with Bishopmill Primary School in Elgin and the installation of a new road crossing on Morriston Road, Elgin,
- ii. that the Transportation Manager will make contact within the next 7 days with the Head Teacher of Bishopmill Primary School to agree a timeline for discussions to take place to engage collaboratively with the Parent council and school in order to provide more detailed information in regard to the positioning of a new road crossing and to discuss with them other mitigations such as the Schools Streets Pilot or the Park Smart initiative that may help address some of their concerns.
- iii. that the Transportation Manager will look into the issue raised by Councillor Coull in respect of the road safety issue in relation to Keith Primary School and will report back to the Ward Members in this regard.

## **8 Marine Safety Q2 2021-2022**

Under reference to paragraph 6 of the Minute of the Meeting of this Committee dated 20 March 2018, a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) informed the Committee with regard to matters of Marine Safety and Compliance with the Port Marine Safety Code (PMSSC) for the second quarter of 2021/22. The report also sought the Committee's approval to a revised Berthing Policy.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- i. note the safety performance, fulfilling their function as Duty Holder under the Port Marine Safety Code; and
- ii. approve a revised berthing policy as set out in Appendix 2 of the report.

## **9 Annual Report on Energy Strategy/Actions**

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) provided details of the annual energy performance for the Council's non-domestic properties in 2020/21. The report also sought approval to review the Council's

Heating Policy which has been in place for a number of years with a view to a revised policy being reported to this Committee in 2022.

Following consideration the Committee agreed:

- i. to note the Annual Energy Report for 2020/21;
- ii. to note that in 2020/21 the Council's energy consumption in non-domestic operational properties fell by 7.3%, and the energy bill decreased by 13.5% (£430,421); and
- iii. that officers review the Council's Heating Policy with a view to reporting a revised Heating Policy to Committee in 2022.

## **10 Industrial Portfolio Annual Report 2020-21**

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) setting out the annual performance of the Council's Industrial Portfolio in 2020/21.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- (i) note the Annual Industrial Portfolio Report for 2020/21;
- (ii) welcome the good performance of the Council's Industrial Portfolio; and
- (iii) approve the Annual Review of the portfolio's constituent properties as set out in Section 6 of the report.

## **11 Climate Change Strategy Update**

Under reference to paragraph 13 of the minute of the meeting of Moray Council dated 10 March 2021, a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) provided an update on actions within the Climate Change Strategy (CCS) for 2020-2030, consultancy studies, staffing and next steps in order to set out a route map to achieve the Council's declaration of being net zero by 2030. The report also proposed that a CCS Programme Board is established to monitor and review strategic progress in delivering the action plan.

Following consideration the Committee agreed:

- i. to note the updates on the actions set out in the CCS as set out in Appendix 1;
- ii. to note the progress and timescales for the consultancy work commissioned on hydrogen, buildings and transport;
- iii. that a route map to becoming net zero by 2030 including short, medium and long term actions be reported back to Committee in April 2022;
- iv. that the CCS Officer/ Member working group is replaced by a CCS Programme board to monitor and review strategic progress in delivering the action plan; and that this group is supported by a CCS operational officer group (or sub groups) which meets monthly.

## **12 Routemap to Community Wealth Building Strategy and Delivery**

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) provided the Committee with details of the Routemap to Community Wealth Building (CWB) Strategy and Delivery for Moray and requested that the Committee agree to the proposed timescales and governance arrangements as outlined in the report.

Following consideration the Committee agreed:

- i. to the establishment of a Moray Anchor Network to oversee the coordination of the Community Wealth Building Strategy;
- ii. the proposed timescales for development of a Community Wealth Building Strategy for Moray, and
- iii. that a further report is considered for a future meeting of full Council regarding Elected Member representation on the Moray Anchor Network.

## **13 Supplier Development Programme Membership**

Under reference to paragraph 11 of the Minute of the meeting of the Economic Growth, Housing and Environmental Sustainability Committee dated 6 October 2020 a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) provided the Committee with an update on the Supplier Development Programme Membership.

Following consideration the Committee approved membership of the Supplier Development Programme to be reviewed once the Community Wealth Strategy and Action Plan are developed.

## **14 Question Time**

Councillor Divers sought an update on the proposed road crossing on Thornhill Road next to Meadow Crescent in New Elgin that had been discussed at the meeting of the New Elgin Primary School Parent Council Meeting in September.

In response the Transportation Manager apologised to Councillor Divers for the delay in responding and advised that she was aware that this had been discussed within the Transportation Team within the past few weeks and assured him that it was still on the list of work to be undertaken. She further advised that she would respond to the Ward Members with an indicative timeline in the new few days but highlighted that the ongoing situation within the Team in terms of resource for infrastructure schemes which meant they could not progress as quickly as they would aspire to.

The Chair stated that he was aware that the pressures on the Transportation Team have been significant but that they should begin to ease now that several of the outstanding vacancies have been filled albeit it will take a little time for new staff to be in.

Councillor Warren sought an update on the uptake of the Scotland Loves Local Gift Card initiative and whether the Council needs to promote it further as she had not seen much evidence of it in shops locally.

In response the Head of Economic Growth and Development advised that he did not have the detail to hand but that he would seek an update and circulate it to all members of the committee.

Councillor Eagle referred to the issue raised at question time at the meeting of the Education, Children and Leisure Services Committee held on 6 October 2021 where he sought an update on whether the Council's position with regards to School Crossing Patrollers was being considered to allow further discussion on the issue. He stated that it was a matter that crossed between the two committees but asked whether the Head of Transportation could advise if an update report was due to be reported.

In response the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) advised that she was aware that the issue was raised at the Education, Children and Leisure Services Committee meeting but would require to see the terms of the specific request made at that meeting. If there was information required it could be tied into the committee cycle but it would be usual to share that with Members and if there was a specific decision that Members wished to debate it would be brought up through the committee cycle. She further advised that at the time the budgetary decision was made to remove school crossing patrollers a number of mitigations were put in place including Active Travel plans and was aware of parking pilots around schools etc. and her assumption was that that was the kind of information that Members sought, however not having been in attendance at the committee in question was waiting for information coming forward from that. She further advised that if that is the sort of information that Members were requiring that this could be provided separately and if there is a decision to follow from that this can be brought forward through the committee process.

Councillor Warren, in her capacity as Chair of the Education, Children and Leisure Services Committee stated that it had been agreed that an update on the progress of all of the mitigations put in place would be provided as an update to be brought back to the Committee.

The Chair stated that in light of the responses from the Depute Chief Executive and Councillor Warren he was confident the issue raised could be resolved.