

**MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE LEADERSHIP BOARD
HELD ON 18th FEBRUARY, 2015**

PRESENT

Councillors Kelly, Williams, E Devine, Cameron, Henry, M Macmillan, McCartin, I McMillan, Andy Doig, Noon, Holmes, Harte and Nicolson.

Councillor M Macmillan, Convener, presided.

IN ATTENDANCE

S Black, Chief Executive; S MacDougall, Director of Community Resources; M Crearie, Director of Development & Housing Services; A Russell, Director of Finance & Resources; P Macleod, Director of Social Work; D Leese, Chief Officer Designate to the Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership; and M Carberry, Head of Reform & Change Management, K Graham, Head of Legal & Democratic Services, L Belshaw, Democratic Services Manager, R McGrath, Welfare Reform Programme Manager and C Donnelly, Human Resources & Organisational Development Manager (all Finance & Resources).

APOLOGY

Councillor Glen.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest intimated prior to the commencement of the meeting.

1. BETTER COUNCIL PROGRAMME – MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to revised chief officer management arrangements for the Council as set out in the appendix to the report. The changes would bring renewed focus to the delivery of the Council's key priorities in the context of continued financial restraints. They were also designed to enable the delivery of the new corporate support arrangements and to provide the right mix of skills and capacity at a senior management level in the Council.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the chief officer structures as detailed in the appendix to the report be approved and that authority be delegated to the Chief Executive to implement the new structures in consultation with the relevant conveners; and
- (b) That it be noted that a review of the structure would be carried out after the first year of operation to review its effectiveness and any further changes would be reported to the Board, as necessary, by the Chief Executive.

2. A BETTER FUTURE, A BETTER COUNCIL – YEAR 1 MONITORING REPORT

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to progress to date in terms of delivery of the Council plan and key achievements in relation to jobs and the economy; improved health, well-being and life chances for children and families; improved support to vulnerable adults; reduction in the causes and impact of poverty; and a safer and stronger Renfrewshire.

The report set out the key focus for the Council over the next year which included developing economic benefits realisation plans for City Deal projects; developing Invest in Renfrewshire programmes to focus on supporting people who were furthest from the labour market; exploring opportunities for further improvement, collaboration and innovation through the new joint Children's Services Directorate; completion of the Johnstone Town Hall project; establishment of the Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership; developing with partners, joint commissioning strategies; developing a tackling poverty strategy; preparing for the redesign of the community justice system; and continuing to progress the development of the change programme.

Councillor Nicolson submitted an amendment which Councillor M Macmillan ruled was not competent in terms of Standing Order 21(a).

Councillor M Macmillan intimated that a report would be submitted to a future meeting of the Leadership Board in relation to political balance on appointments to external bodies.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the progress that had been made to date by services in terms of delivering the Council plan be noted;
- (b) That it be agreed that a further progress update be prepared and submitted to the Board in December, 2015; and
- (c) That it be noted that a report would be submitted to a future meeting of the Board in relation to political balance on appointments to external bodies.

3. UNIVERSAL CREDIT

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to the roll out across the UK of Universal Credit (UC) and providing details of the timetable for implementation in the Renfrewshire area.

Universal Credit was a core component of the UK government's welfare reform programme and combined all working-age benefits and tax credits into one single benefit which was paid monthly to one person in the household. It was noted that the Department for Work and Pensions' (DWP) plans for Renfrewshire only related to single job seekers who may also rent their property. No information had been received on the numbers expected to move to UC. However, it was expected that these may be low. The report referred to the challenges of UC, including personal budgeting, digital access, wider benefits advice and housing support, to the additional burden to the Council and preparations which were being made by the Council to support customers.

Councillor M Macmillan indicated that it was his intention to write to Job Centre Plus and to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in relation to the level of sanctions imposed in Renfrewshire.

DECIDED:

- (a) That it be noted that Universal Credit would be implemented by DWP in Renfrewshire from June, 2015;

- (b) That the Chief Executive be authorised to negotiate the terms of a Delivery Partnership Agreement with DWP on the nature and extent of the support services to be delivered for people in the Renfrewshire area who were moving on to Universal Credit. This would include negotiation on the resources that would be provided to the Council to deliver the agreed level of support;
- (c) That it be noted that an update would be provided to a future meeting of the Board; and
- (d) That it be noted that Councillor M Macmillan would write to Job Centre Plus and to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in relation to the level of sanctions imposed in Renfrewshire.

4. LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR SCOTLAND – UPDATE ON FIFTH REVIEW OF ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

There was submitted a report by the Director of Finance & Resources relative to the Boundary Commission for Scotland's Fifth Review of Electoral Arrangements. The review was being undertaken in two phases ahead of a report being submitted to Scottish Ministers in May 2016.

The report provided an update on the outcome of the first phase of the Review, a report on which had been considered at the meeting of the Board held on 2nd April, 2014, and which maintained the recommendation that the number of elected members in Renfrewshire be increased to 43; and explained the arrangements for the second phase of the Review which concerned the ward boundaries and the number of wards within each Council area. The timetable for the review was appended to the report. It was noted that the two-month statutory consultation period with councils on ward boundaries was due to start on 19th March and conclude on 14th May, 2015, with public consultation occurring between July and September 2015.

Councillor Doig, seconded by Councillor Nicolson, moved that the Board, recognising the importance of facilitating the fullest local discussion of potential ward boundaries, and the possible permutations thereof, in the interests of local democracy, calls on the Local Government Boundary Commission to hold a public consultation from 15th May to 30th September, 2015 and that there be deleted from clause 3.6 of the report 'that there will be a public consultation occurring between July and September, 2015'. This was agreed unanimously.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the outcome of the first phase of the Review which maintained the recommendation that the number of elected members in Renfrewshire be increased to 43 be noted;
- (b) That the arrangements for the second phase of the Review which concerned ward boundaries in each council area be further noted; and
- (c) That the Board, recognising the importance of facilitating the fullest local discussion of potential ward boundaries, and the possible permutations thereof, in the interests of local democracy, calls on the Local Government Boundary Commission to hold a public consultation from 15th May to 30th September, 2015 and that there be deleted from clause 3.6 of the report 'that there will be a public consultation occurring between July and September, 2015'.