

Minute of Meeting Economy & Jobs Policy Board

| Date | Time | Venue |
|---------------------------|-------|--|
| Wednesday, 31 August 2016 | 13:00 | Council Chambers (Renfrewshire), Council Headquarters, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AN |

PRESENT

Councillors Caldwell, Andy Doig, Glen, Provost Hall and Councillors Harte, Holmes, Hood, K MacLaren, McCartin, Nicolson and J Sharkey.

CHAIR

Councillor Glen, Convener, presided.

IN ATTENDANCE

M Crearie, Director of Development & Housing Services; L Mahon, Head of Marketing (Chief Executive's); A Morrison, Head of Regeneration, R Cooper, Economic Development Manager, V Howie, Finance & Resource Manager and C Saez, Assistant Manager – Business Support (all Development & Housing Services); and A McNaughton, Senior Committee Services Officer (Finance & Resources).

APOLOGIES

Councillors Cameron and Mullin.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

1 REVENUE MONITORING REPORT

There was submitted a joint revenue budget monitoring report by the Directors of Finance & Resources and Development & Housing Services for the period 1 April to 24 June 2016.

DECIDED:

(a) That the report be noted, and

(b) That net budget re-alignments of £728,568 related to the draw-down of ring-fenced Invest in Renfrewshire reserves, partially offset by the transfer of events tourism marketing be noted.

2 CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

There was submitted a capital budget monitoring report by the Director of Finance & Resources for the period 1 April to 24 June 2016.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

3 PAISLEY TOWNSCAPE HERITAGE/CONSERVATION AREA REGENERATION SCHEME (TH/CARS2) GRANT ACCEPTANCE

There was submitted an update report by the Director of Development & Housing Services relative to funding awards and the proposed next steps to deliver the Paisley Townscape Heritage/Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (TH/CARS2) project in line with the Heritage Strategy and the Paisley 2021 UK City of Culture bid.

The report advised that, in support of the Paisley Town Centre Heritage Asset Strategy, applications had been made to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for a second Paisley Townscape Heritage (TH2) project and to Historic Environment Scotland (HES) for a complementary Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS). Both applications were successful and grants of £995,554 from HES and £1,882,000 from HLF were awarded.

The report detailed the next steps to deliver the project, including the appointment of four full-time project staff on a fixed-term basis to deliver the project over the next five years; grants to property owners for building repair/restoration and shop-front improvement works; grants for the repair and restoration of key historic buildings; and, delivery of an Activity Plan entitled "The Making of Paisley". It was anticipated that the project would be launched formally in January 2017. Further update reports would be submitted to this Board in due course.

DECIDED: That the Director of Development & Housing Services be authorised to accept the Heritage Lottery Fund Stage 2 grant of £1,882,000 and the Historic Environment Scotland Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme grant of £998,554 to enable the delivery of the TH/CARS2 project.

4 EUROPEAN STRUCTURAL FUNDS 2014/20

There was submitted a report by the Director of Development & Housing Services relative to an overview of current funding from European Union Structural Funds 2014/20 programmes. The report highlighted the funding secured for the initial period to 2018 and the anticipated, but now uncertain, balance of funding for 2018/20.

The report set out notional levels of funding available to the Council from European Structural Funds (ESF) in 2014/20 for Pipeline, Youth Employment Initiative (which had been fully committed) and Poverty & Social Inclusion and under European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) for Business Competitiveness. Formal offers of grant had been accepted by the Chief Executive, securing a total of £7,493,482 of EU funding for the period 2015/18. The report explained that, as a result of the UK decision to leave the EU 'Brexit', funding allocated to deliver these projects in 2018/20, totalling £2,546,773 may now be lost.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the notional levels of European Union funding offered to Renfrewshire Council for the 2014/20 European Structural Funds programmes as approved at previous Boards, be noted;
- (b) That it be noted that the Board had already approved the full Youth Employment Initiative offer of grant of £5.03 million;
- (c) That the action of the Chief Executive to accept the formal offer of grant for applications relating to European Structural Funds Pipeline, Social Inclusion and Business Competitiveness programme, be homologated; and
- (d) That it be noted that the balance of funding for 2018/20 may now be lost as a result of Brexit.

5 BUSINESS GATEWAY DELIVERY

There was submitted a report by the Director of Development & Housing Services relative to the delivery of Business Gateway services.

The report explained that the Council managed delivery of the Business Gateway contract, due to expire on 30 September 2016, across the wider Renfrewshire area (incorporating East Renfrewshire and Inverclyde). Over the last year, an options appraisal had been carried out to consider the most appropriate delivery model for future Business Gateway services. The report set out the conclusions of the options appraisal and the appendix to the report detailed Business Gateway delivery models across Scotland.

Councillor Glen, seconded by Councillor Hood, moved:

- (a) that it be noted that a full options appraisal had taken place;
- (b) that it be agreed that the Business Gateway service be delivered separately and in-house by the three local authorities from 1 October 2016;

(c) that the Director of Development & Housing Services be authorised to finalise negotiations with the other two local authorities regarding the final split in budgets, and TUPE issues and to develop an appropriate service level agreement between the three local authorities for the future delivery of the service; and

(d) that further reports on the performance of Renfrewshire's ongoing Business Gateway service be submitted to this Board.

Councillor Nicolson, seconded by Councillor Andy Doig, moved as an amendment that:

(a) Board notes that a full options appraisal has taken place yet the board paper was devoid of detail. No detail was given of financial implications ie. Savings/additional costs. The benefits/disbenefits of the in-house option compared to the existing model and why the existing contract had failed to deliver enhanced outcomes or provide the flexibility that this board paper implies was lacking;

(b) Rejects the proposal to bring the Business Gateway service in-house until all the relevant information was provided to elected members in order to make an informed decision; and

(c) This Board also rejects any attempts by this failing Labour administration to hand over our Business Development/Enterprise activities to the failed Labour administration of Glasgow City Council as noted in the board paper.

On the roll being called the following members voted for the amendment: Councillors Andy Doig, Mack, K MacLaren and Nicolson.

The following members voted for the motion: Councillors Caldwell, Glen, Provost Hall, Councillors Harte, Holmes, Hood, McCartin and J Sharkey.

4 members having voted for the amendment and 8 members having voted for the motion, the motion was accordingly declared carried.

DECIDED:

(a) That it be noted that a full options appraisal had taken place;

(b) That it be agreed that the Business Gateway service be delivered separately and in-house by the three local authorities from 1 October 2016;

(c) That the Director of Development & Housing Services be authorised to finalise negotiations with the other two local authorities regarding the final split in budgets, and TUPE issues and to develop an appropriate service level agreement between the three local authorities for the future delivery of the service; and

(d) That further reports on the performance of Renfrewshire's on-going Business Gateway service be submitted to this Board.

6 RENFREWSHIRE TOURISM FRAMEWORK PROGRESS AND "RENFREWSHIRE BRAND" PRESENTATION

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to progress to deliver the Renfrewshire Tourism Framework. The report was complemented by a presentation entitled "Renfrewshire Brand" by the Head of Marketing on the development of a destination brand for Paisley and Renfrewshire.

The report detailed the five objectives of the Renfrewshire Tourism Framework and advised of progress to deliver the four main themes of leadership and collaboration; building our capabilities; improving the customer journey; and, providing authentic experiences as set out in the Renfrewshire Tourism Framework Action Plan 2015/17. The report highlighted that a strategic tourism and visitor planning team had been established and would develop a visitor strategy in collaboration with partner organisations and private industry providers.

Councillor Andy Doig, seconded by Councillor Nicolson, moved that Objective 1, as set out in paragraph 3.1 of the report, be amended to read:

"To tell the story and define the visitor product for Paisley and to subsequently display, curate and align the town's heritage assets around this offer. Furthermore, a complementary strategy of improving the visitor offer for all of Renfrewshire will be developed by officially designating identified communities as Villages of Culture and Heritage". This was agreed.

DECIDED:

(a) That the report be noted;

(b) That, it be agreed, that a new Visitor Strategy be brought for approval in December 2016; and

(c) That Objective 1, as set out in paragraph 3.1 of the report, be amended to read "To tell the story and define the visitor product for Paisley and to subsequently display, curate and align the town's heritage assets around this offer. Furthermore, a complementary strategy of improving the visitor offer for all of Renfrewshire will be developed by officially designating identified communities as Villages of Culture and Heritage".

7 LABOUR MARKET UPDATE

There was submitted an update report by the Director of Development & Housing Services relative to labour market statistics for Renfrewshire as at 31 July 2016 and providing comparisons, where data was available, with Scottish and UK labour markets. The Renfrewshire Economic Development Newsletter, dated July 2016, was attached to the report and highlighted that the method of reporting unemployment statistics had been changed nationally to incorporate new experimental Universal Credit figures.

The report indicated that Renfrewshire's overall Claimant Count (experimental) figure for July 2016 was 2.6% with 2905 people claiming Job Seekers Allowance. The figure remained unchanged over the last three months but still represented a fall from 2.9% at the same time last year.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the employment and claimant count figures for July 2016 be noted; and
- (b) That the change in reporting to new experimental statistics incorporating the Universal Credit figures be noted.