

Minute of Meeting Economy & Jobs Policy Board

Date	Time	Venue
Wednesday, 20 May 2015	13:00	Council Chambers (Renfrewshire), Council Headquarters, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AN

PRESENT

Councillors Caldwell, Cameron, Andy Doig, Glen, Provost Hall and Councillors Holmes, Hood, McCartin, McGurk, Mullin and J Sharkey.

CHAIR

Councillor Glen, Convener, presided.

IN ATTENDANCE

M Crearie, Director of Development & Housing Services; F Carlin, Head of Planning & Development, R Cooper, Economic Development Manager, V Howie, Finance & Resource Manager, S McMillan, Policy & Regeneration Manager and A Moulson, Town Centres Project Manager (all Development & Housing Services) and A McNaughton, Senior Committee Services Officer (Finance & Resources).

APOLOGIES

Councillor Harte and Nicolson.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

1 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

There was submitted a joint revenue budget monitoring report by the Directors of Finance & Resources and Development and Housing Services for the period 1 April 2014 to 27 February 2015.

DECIDED:

(a) That the report be noted; and

(b) That it be noted that there had been no budget realignments processed since the last report.

2 CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

There was submitted a capital budget monitoring report by the Director of Finance & Resources for the period 1 April 2014 to 27 February 2015.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

3 SOCIAL ENTERPRISE SMALL GRANTS FUND

There was submitted a report by the Director of Development & Housing Services relative to progress to deliver the Social Enterprise Small Grants Fund.

The report intimated that £100,000 had been made available from the Invest in Renfrewshire budget to establish the Social Enterprise Small Grant Fund and to date, five grants had been awarded at a cost of £20,782. The report highlighted the awards already made and advised that the current balance of £79,218 was expected to be committed to the outline applications already being developed. A further commitment of £100,000 from the Invest in Renfrewshire budget was sought to continue to provide this grant.

The report also sought approval to make an award to Paisley 2021 Community Development Trust of up to £34,000 from the Invest in Renfrewshire budget to support the development of a feasibility study and business case for a new multipurpose performing and visual arts venue in Paisley, on a phased basis, subject to appropriate "Gateways" set by the Director of Development & Housing Services, in consultation with the Director of Finance & Resources.

DECIDED:

(a) That progress to deliver the Social Enterprise Small Grants Fund and the awards made to date be noted;

(b) That a further commitment of £100,000 to the Social Enterprise Small Grants Fund from the Invest in Renfrewshire social enterprise budget be approved; and

(c) That, for the purposes set out within the report, an award of up to £34,000 to the Paisley 2021 Community Development Trust from the Invest in Renfrewshire budget be approved.

4 INVEST IN RENFREWSHIRE: OPERATING BUDGET 2015/16

There was submitted a report by the Director of Development & Housing Services summarising the broad range of activities and programmes to be undertaken to deliver the various strands of the Invest in Renfrewshire programme during 2015/16 in pursuit of the key objectives of creating jobs and growing the local economy.

The report detailed the economic development operating programme budget for 2015/16 that reflected the commitment made by the Council when allocating a total of £10.5m to Invest in Renfrewshire over the period 2012/17 and detailed the external funding that had been secured from a variety of sources including European Union funding from the new Scottish programme 2014/20.

DECIDED:

(a) That the operating programme for Invest in Renfrewshire economic development activity in 2015/16 as detailed within the report be approved;

(b) That, in order to continue to maximise outcomes from the Invest in Renfrewshire programme, officers be authorised to work in conjunction with the Director of Finance & Resources to realign and re-profile the programme, as necessary, within the Council's overall requirement to maintain sufficient reserves, and apply for external funding to augment the programme; and

(c) That it be agreed that regular reports on initiatives and projects be submitted to this Board as a means of monitoring performance and approving funding submissions.

5 PAISLEY HERITAGE ASSET STRATEGY: TOWN CENTRE OPERATING BUDGET 2015/16

There was submitted a report by the Director of Development & Housing Services relative to the operating budget for the Paisley Heritage Asset Strategy and for all of Renfrewshire's town centres and events activity during 2015/16, as set out in the relevant tables contained within the report.

DECIDED: That the 2015/16 operating budget for the Paisley Town Centre Heritage Asset Strategy and the town centres events programme as set out within the report be approved.

6 PAISLEY HERITAGE ASSET STRATEGY: PROGRESS REPORT 3

There was submitted a third progress report by the Director of Development & Housing Services relative to delivery of the Paisley Town Centre Heritage Asset Strategy (PTCHAS) from October 2014 to March 2015.

The report featured progress to deliver the museum refurbishment/extension; relocate Renfrewshire Museum stores; establish the InCube Business Incubator; deliver the townscape heritage/conservation area regeneration scheme II; pursue a UK City of Culture bid; deliver events, festivals and a cultural strategy; engage with partners; awards achieved and summarised the way forward.

Councillor Glen, seconded by Councillor Hood, moved that the significant progress made to deliver the Paisley Town Centre Heritage Asset Strategy be noted.

Councillor Andy Doig, seconded by Councillor Cameron, moved as an amendment that the recommendation contained in the report be deleted and replaced with: "that the Board notes the failure of this Labour administration to have a coherent and planned approach to the delivery of heritage assets across Paisley and Renfrewshire, deplores the lack of tangible progress in an area with so much job creation potential and calls on the new Tourism Officer to present a detailed report to the next Economy & Jobs Policy Board on the shape of the Renfrewshire Tourism Framework".

On the roll being called, the following members voted for the amendment: Councillors McGurk, Cameron and Andy Doig.

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

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

DECIDED: That the significant progress made to deliver the Paisley Town Centre Heritage Asset Strategy be noted.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor McGurk declared an interest in relation to the following two items of business, given that she was a business owner operating from premises in Paisley. She left the meeting and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

7 INVEST IN RENFREWSHIRE: RETAIL IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

There was submitted an update report by the Director of Development & Housing Services relative to delivery of the Retail Improvement Scheme during 2014/15 as part of the Invest in Renfrewshire programme. An appendix to the report detailed the offers of support provided during 2014/15.

The Retail Improvement Scheme provided financial assistance to owners and occupiers of small business properties in established retail areas throughout Renfrewshire towards shop front improvements. Authority was sought to allocate £300,000 from the Invest in Renfrewshire programme budget to continue the Scheme during 2015/16.

Councillor Glen, seconded by Councillor Hood, moved: (a) that an allocation of £300,000 of Invest in Renfrewshire funding to allow a Retail Improvement Scheme to be operated across Renfrewshire during 2015/16 be approved; and (b) that the successful delivery of the Retail Improvement Scheme in 2014/15 as detailed within the report be noted.

Councillor Andy Doig, seconded by Councillor Cameron, moved as an amendment to recommendation 2.1(i) that "£300,000" be deleted and "£500,000" inserted.

On the roll being called, the following members voted for the amendment: Councillors Cameron, McCartin and Andy Doig.

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

3 members having voted for the amendment and 7 members having voted for the motion, the motion was accordingly declared carried.

DECIDED:

(a) That an allocation of £300,000 of Invest in Renfrewshire funding to allow a Retail Improvement Scheme to be operated across Renfrewshire during 2015/16 be approved; and

(b) That the successful delivery of the Retail Improvement Scheme in 2014/15 as detailed within the report be noted.

8 BROADBAND CONNECTION VOUCHER SCHEME

There was submitted a report by the Director of Development & Housing Services relative to the UK government-funded Broadband Connection Voucher Scheme that assisted businesses and third-sector organisations to meet the capital costs of a high speed/high grade broadband connection to their premises.

The report detailed the application process and the eligibility criteria to apply. Broadband Connection Vouchers were being delivered by 50 City Regions across the UK on a first come, first served basis until 31 March 2016. The scheme involved all of the local authorities within the Glasgow & Clyde Valley City Region and provided grants of up to £3,000 to small and medium-sized enterprises including registered charities, social enterprises and sole traders to cover the installation costs of a faster and better broadband service. As the rollout of vouchers was based on demand, the uptake in Renfrewshire could not be estimated at this stage.

DECIDED:

(a) That the report be noted; and

(b) That participation in the Broadband Connection Voucher Scheme as a means of providing greater access to superfast and ultrafast broadband services for small and medium-sized enterprises in Renfrewshire be approved.

SEDERUNT

Councillor McGurk re-entered the meeting.

9 SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2015/18

There was submitted a report by the Director of Development & Housing Services relative to the Service Improvement Plan for 2015/18, a copy of which was appended to the report.

The plan set out a comprehensive statement of the service aims and objectives for the next three years, based on the resources likely to be available, and took account of the themes, actions, outcomes and targets contained in the Council Plan, Single Outcome Agreement and Community Plan.

The Service Improvement Plan incorporated an action plan that detailed the priorities, the key tasks to be delivered and a timetable for delivery, together with a performance scorecard against which progress and outcomes would be measured. Progress to deliver the Service Improvement Plan would be monitored and reported to the Board on a six-monthly basis.

DECIDED:

(a) That the Service Improvement Plan for 2015/18, as appended to the report, be approved; and

(b) That progress to deliver the plan be reported to this Board in November 2015.

10 SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN OUTTURN REPORT 2014/17

There was submitted an outturn report by the Director of Development & Housing Services relative to delivery of the Service Improvement Plan for 2014/17 detailing progress achieved to deliver the tasks set out in the action plan up to the end of March 2015.

The report summarised the main achievements of the Development & Housing Service over the year to 31st March, 2015 and included, as Appendix 1 to the report, an action plan that monitored progress to date and identified areas where significant advances had been made and actions that had been reviewed or delayed. A range of performance indicators measuring annual progress to deliver key tasks was set out in a scorecard that formed Appendix 2 to the report.

DECIDED:

(a) That progress to implement the 2014/17 Service Improvement Plan actions and performance indicators be noted; and

(b) That it be agreed that progress to deliver the 2015/18 Service Improvement Plan be reviewed in November 2015.

11 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 March 2015 and providing comparisons, where data was available, with Scottish and UK markets. The Renfrewshire Economic Development Newsletter – April 2015 was appended to the report.

The percentage of Job Seeker Allowance (JSA) claimants in Renfrewshire had fallen from 3.8% in March 2014 to 2.9% in March 2015 in line with the average reduction in Scotland. Youth unemployment had fallen from 6.9% in March 2014 to 4.4% currently. All of the JSA rates had dropped substantially from the same time last year.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.