

Minute of Meeting Leadership Board

Date	Time	Venue
Wednesday, 02 December 2020	13:00	Teams meeting,

Present

Councillor Jacqueline Cameron, Councillor Eddie Devine, Councillor Andy Doig, Councillor Neill Graham, Councillor Jim Harte, Councillor Lisa-Marie Hughes, Councillor Eileen McCartin, Councillor Cathy McEwan, Councillor Marie McGurk, Councillor John McIntyre, Councillor John McNaughtan, Councillor Iain Nicolson, Councillor Jim Paterson, Councillor John Shaw, Councillor James Sheridan

Chair

Councillor Nicolson, Convener, presided.

Recording of Meeting

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Convener intimated that this meeting of the Board would be recorded and that the recording would be available to watch on the Council's website.

In Attendance

S Black, Chief Executive; M Crearie, Director of Communities, Housing & Planning Services; G McNeil, Director of Environment & Infrastructure; A Russell, Director of Finance & Resources; L Mahon, Head of Communications & Marketing, L McIntyre, Head of Policy & Commissioning, A Morrison, Head of Regeneration, B Walker, City Deal Project Director, K Waters, Programme Manager, S Jones, Assistant Manager Regeneration and D Christie, Senior Communications Officer (all Chief Executive's); J Calder, Head of Early Years & Broad General Education and J Trainer, Head of Child Care & Criminal Justice (both Children's Services); F Carlin, Head of Planning & Housing Services, O Reid, Head of Communities & Public Protection and C Dalrymple, Communities & Regulatory Manager (all Communities, Housing & Planning Services) K Graham, Head of Corporate Governance, A MacArthur, Head of Finance, R McGrath, Head of Business & Customer Services, L Neary, Head of Transformation, HR and OD, M Conaghan, Legal & Democratic Services Manager, G Dickie, Partnering &

Commissioning Manager and L Belshaw and D Low, Democratic Services Managers (all Finance & Resources); S Strachan, Interim Chief Officer, Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership; and V Hollows, Chief Executive, Renfrewshire Leisure.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Hughes declared a non-financial interest in respect of items 1, 5 and 9 of the agenda as she was Chair of the Board of Renfrewshire Leisure Limited. Councillor Hughes indicated that as she had a general dispensation from the Standards Commission which allowed her to take part and to vote in relation to such matters it was her intention to remain in the meeting during consideration of these items.

Councillor McCartin declared a non-financial interest in respect of items 1, 5 and 9 of the agenda as she was a member of the Board of Renfrewshire Leisure Limited. Councillor McCartin indicated that as she had a general dispensation from the Standards Commission which allowed her to take part and to vote in relation to such matters it was her intention to remain in the meeting during consideration of these items.

Declarations of Interest

Councillors Hughes and McCartin having previously declared an interest in the following item remained in the meeting.

1 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report

There was submitted a joint report by the Chief Executive, Director of Finance & Resources and Chief Finance Officer, Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership relative to the projected revenue and capital outturn positions as at 31 March 2021 across all services reporting to this Board. For financial year 2020/21 the projected outturn position was split into core (business as usual) and Covid-19 related variances to outline the impact of the pandemic on service finances.

The report intimated that there was a projected annual overspend of £2.244 million in revenue expenditure and there were £6.866 million capital budget adjustments. Details of these variances were outlined in the report.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the projected revenue outturn position detailed in Table 1 of the report be noted;
- (b) That the projected capital outturn position detailed in Table 2 of the report be noted; and
- (c) That the budget adjustments detailed at sections 4 and 6 of the report be noted.

2 Climate Change Sub-committee

There was submitted the Minute (attached hereto) of the meeting of the Climate Change Sub-committee held on 28 October 2020.

DECIDED: That the Minute be approved.

3 Climate Change Update

Under reference to item 3 of the Minute of the meeting of the Board held on 16 September 2020 there was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to the activities being progressed by the Climate Change Sub-committee and seeking the homologation of the submission by officers of the Public Sector Climate Duties report to the Scottish Government by the statutory deadline of 30 November 2020.

The report intimated that the first meeting of the Sub-committee took place on 28 October 2020. The Minute of the Sub-committee was considered at item 2 of this Minute. At its meeting the Sub-committee received an update in relation to recent policy developments; funding announcements; and on the Council's consultation on the creation of biodiversity areas in communities. The appendix to the report was the Public Sector Climate Duty report which was prepared and submitted to the Scottish Government on an annual basis and which had also been considered by the Sub-committee.

It was proposed that members be provided with an update in relation to the catchment area study with Inverclyde Council. This was agreed.

DECIDED:

(a) That the update in terms of activities being progressed by the Climate Change Sub-committee be noted;

(b) That the submission to the Scottish Government by officers of the Public Sector Climate Change Duties Report 2019/20, as appended to the report, by the statutory deadline of 30 November 2020 be homologated; and

(c) That members be provided with an update in relation to the catchment area study with Inverclyde Council.

4 Right for Renfrewshire – Change & Transformation Programme 2020/21 – 2022/23

Under reference to item 2 of the Minute of the meeting of the Board held on 19 February 2020 there was submitted a joint report by the Chief Executive and Director of Finance & Resources relative to the Council's change and transformation programme Right for Renfrewshire (R4R) which had been paused in response to the Council and its resources being fully focussed on managing the Covid-19 response. It was noted that the R4R programme had quickly become much more critical as a consequence of the impact of Covid-19 with the achievement of medium term financial sustainability now an acute challenge for the Council.

The report intimated that the delivery and implementation of tranche 1 transformation changes had been disrupted and delayed as had work to bring forward and develop the second tranche. The report provided an update on the revised implementation arrangements for the tranche 1 service redesigns, which the Corporate Management Team had been remobilising. The report noted that Covid-19 continued to significantly impact corporate capacity and this was now expected to continue well into 2021 which in turn would push back the work to establish plans for further tranches of change projects. However, the report highlighted that the experience of the Covid-19 response had in some instances reaffirmed the existing direction of travel and had accelerated some aspects of transformation, particularly in relation to the digitisation of services where uptake in transacting digitally with the Council and households registering to use the Council's Customer Portal had increased significantly.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the latest update on the Right for Renfrewshire Programme be noted;
- (b) That the progress achieved in relation to the tranche 1 service redesigns and the revised implementation timelines in the context of the disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic to the programme delivery be noted;
- (c) That it be noted that the expectation that the delivery of future savings from the programme was now expected to be significantly altered from previous planning assumptions by the ongoing impact of the Covid-19 response and recovery period and that the impact of this significant change had informed the recommended adjustments made to the financial strategy approved by Council in September 2020; and
- (d) That it be noted that further reports would be brought to future cycles of the Board to provide updates on the progress achieved in relation to the identification of those service areas that would be proposed to constitute tranche 2 of the programme.

Declarations of Interest

Councillors Hughes and McCartin having previously declared an interest in the following item remained in the meeting.

5 Best Value Assurance Report - Progress Update on Improvement Plan

There was submitted an update report by the Chief Executive relative to progress achieved to date in relation to the Best Value Assurance Report for Renfrewshire Council published by the Accounts Commission on 31 August 2017. The report noted that overall the Assurance report had been positive and at that time Audit Scotland had also provided direction on the key areas on which the Council should focus its improvement activities going forward, and had made seven recommendations. An action plan which set out the Council's actions to progress these recommendations relating to areas such as cross-party working; community engagement; partnership working; financial sustainability; workforce planning and governance arrangements had been approved by the Council in September 2017. Initially progress against recommendations had been reported to Board on a six-monthly basis. However, given the significant progress achieved to date this was now done on an annual basis as agreed with Audit Scotland. This annual progress report also included actions relating to best value which had been recommended by Audit Scotland within its Annual Audit

Report which found that the Council continued to make good progress in addressing the recommendations of the Best Value Assurance Report.

DECIDED: That the progress achieved in terms of implementing the Best Value Assurance Report improvement plan as detailed the appendix to the report be noted.

6 Council Plan Progress Update

There was submitted an update report by the Chief Executive relative to Council-wide progress in relation to existing Council-plan priorities and the ongoing Covid-19 response. The report intimated that the position throughout 2020 had and continued to be very challenging for services and progress in terms of implementing actions set out within the Council Plan and Service Improvement Plans had been impacted significantly. The report also recognised that due to the different context in which services were operating there was a requirement to review existing priorities and activities to ensure that the right type of support was provided to local people, communities and businesses going forward.

The appendix to the report provided a summary of progress against key actions and indicators with the full outturn position for 2019/20. It was noted that in recognition of the importance of regular and relevant service improvement and performance information, work had now commenced to review service improvement planning processes and to develop a revised reporting schedule for progress updates to be provided to policy boards. The report proposed that services provide an interim update on performance within the next service update reports to policy boards from January 2021 with new service improvement plans to be submitted to policy boards from March 2021 which fully reflected the impact of Covid-19 on services.

DECIDED:

(a) That progress achieved against the strategic outcomes since the last update to the Board in December 2019 as outlined in the appendix to the report be noted; and

(b) That the proposed approach and schedule for reporting performance and developing Service Improvement Plans in 2020 be noted.

7 EU Exit

Under reference to item 9 of the Minute of the meeting of the Board held on 4 December 2019 there was submitted an update report by the Chief Executive on the current national position on the UK's exit from the European Union and summarised key areas of interest for local government alongside local preparedness information.

It was noted that although the global Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent UK lockdown had impacted discussions on the UK's exit from the EU, negotiations and the associated legislative programme had continued to progress, particularly in recent months. The report intimated that to date negotiations between the UK Government and the EU had not yet been concluded so the shape of the future relationship between the UK and the EU remained subject to uncertainty. In October 2020 the Prime Minister had commented that the UK should 'get ready' to trade without an agreement and local authorities had continued to prepare jointly for this potential outcome with CoSLA.

In terms of preparedness for the end of the transition period, officers had continued to review activities in relation to availability of goods and services; support for vulnerable people, particularly around food insecurity; support for businesses; the EU settlement scheme, migration and the movement of people; workforce support including communications to staff and signposting to all relevant information; and financial risk, data protection and security.

It was proposed that members be provided with information in relation to State Aid arrangements once the UK had left the EU CoSLA's position on this. This was agreed.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the updated information outlined in the report be noted;
- (b) That the activities undertaken by Council officers to prepare for the end of the transition period be noted; and
- (c) That members be provided with information in relation to State Aid arrangements once the UK had left the EU and CoSLA's position on this.

8 Digital Strategy Update

Under reference to item 4 of the Minute of the meeting of the Board held on 16 September 2020 there was submitted an update report by the Director of Finance & Resources relative to progress against the eight key workstreams within the Digital Strategy.

The report intimated that the Council's digital strategy closely aligned to the national Digital Strategy for Scotland and would be progressed through the eight key workstreams of digital council; digital foundations; digital place; digital leadership and skills; smart data; digital citizen; digital health and social care; and digital learning and teaching. Each of the workstreams was led by a Head of Service and detailed action plans were being developed for each area of activity. An internal Digital Board had also been established to ensure that there was collaboration across these workstreams and to ensure that priority actions were driven forward at pace collectively. The report proposed that updates would be provided to the Board on a six-monthly basis, with the next update due prior to summer 2021.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the progress made to date against the eight key workstreams identified within the Digital Strategy be noted; and
- (b) That it be agreed that future progress updated be provided to the Board every six months.

Declarations of Interest

Councillors Hughes and McCartin having previously declared an interest in the following item remained in the meeting.

9 Renfrewshire Visitor Plan 2018-2021- Final Year Update

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to the final year update of the 2018/21 Renfrewshire Visitor Plan. The report intimated that the Visitor Plan had been developed with national partners and the local sector and had been approved by the Board in December 2017. The priority actions to be delivered within the Plan's three-year lifecycle included: establishment of a tourism business network; sharing data and insights; improving the attractiveness of entry points to the area; increasing support for volunteer-led attractions; improving the consistency in seasonality and extending opening hours; creating new products, trails and itineraries to spotlight all of Renfrewshire; and to improve facilities and itineraries for travel trade. Annual progress reports had been provided giving a detailed overview of activity and progress against targets.

It was noted that Year 3 activity had been impacted significantly by the Covid-19 crisis with businesses within the tourism sector being amongst the worst affected. The report covered progress made throughout the three-year Plan period and the required refocusing of activity to respond to the immediate and longer-term impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the tourism sector in Renfrewshire. The report outlined plans being taken forward in relation to the development of a local recovery plan and priority actions.

DECIDED: That the completion of the Renfrewshire Visitor Plan 2018/21 and Year 3 progress as outlined in Appendix 3 to the report be noted.

10 AMIDS District Heating Network

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to progress of proposals for a low carbon district heating network (DHN) at the Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District Scotland (AMIDS).

The report intimated that responding to the climate emergency had resulted in ambitious targets to reach net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045. The Council had also declared a climate emergencies targets for which included a pledge to work proactively with others to make Renfrewshire Carbon neutral by 2030. The report highlighted that a low carbon district heat solution provided a significant opportunity for AMIDS and Renfrewshire to reduce its future carbon emissions and demonstrate to the rest of Scotland of how a transition to a low carbon future could be achieved. Providing access to an innovative low carbon solution for on-site renewable energy would give AMIDS a competitive advantage over other locations for future investors and would attract further investment and create new and sustainable jobs for Renfrewshire. By developing an ambient loop network, AMIDS would be the first development of its kind in Scotland supplying low carbon heat through a fifth generation heat network. There was also the potential to expand the AMIDS network to supply low carbon heat to other buildings in the surrounding area and these opportunities would be explored by the project team. The report outlined the DHN technology, delivery model; summarised the economic and financial information; and outlined environmental and economic impacts.

DECIDED:

(a) That the progress of the District Heating Network which would be the first of its kind in Scotland and the associated business case be noted;

(b) That the Director of Finance & Resources be authorised to accept grant funding as follows:

(i) capital grant offer of match funding of £2.96m received from the Scottish Government and European Regional Development Fund programme Low Carbon Infrastructure Transition Programme (LCITP) as outlined in section 6 of the report;

(ii) revenue grant offer from Ofgem under the Renewable Heat Incentive scheme amounting to £0.09m for 19 years;

(c) That, subject to satisfactorily securing the LCITP funding detailed at decision (b)(ii) above, that it be approved that the project be progressed and appropriately incorporated into the Council's financial planning arrangements;

(d) That the Director of Finance & Resources be authorised to enter into any further relevant funding agreements as outlined in paragraph 6.7 of the report on the basis that such agreements would reduce the funding requirements from the Council; and

(e) That the Head of Corporate Governance be authorised in conjunction with the Director of Finance & Resources to enter necessary legal agreements with the following key stakeholders:

Scottish Water Horizons in relation to the bulk heat source;

The University of Strathclyde on behalf of the National Manufacturing Institute Scotland as initial customer;

The Centre for Process Innovation on behalf of the Medicines Manufacturing Innovation Centre as initial customer.

11 Extension to the Scottish Government Town Centre Fund 2020-21

Under reference to item 11 of the meeting of the Board held on 19 June 2019 there was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to a further allocation to Renfrewshire of £527,000 from the Scottish Government's Town Centre Fund 2020/21 and seeking homologation of acceptance of these funds. The report set out the proposed allocation of the funds to projects and initiatives and provides an update on progress of Town Centre Fund projects identified previously in 2019.

The report intimated that in 2019 the Scottish Government launched its £50 million Town Centre Fund shared across all Scottish Local Authorities with Renfrewshire receiving £1,459,000. The purpose of the fund was to drive economic activity and improvements to town centres. The Board at its meeting held on 19 June 2019 had agreed a series of projects, progress against which was set out in the report.

In its Programme for Government in 2020 the Scottish Government announced an £18 million extension to the Town Centre Fund to be distributed using the same rationale as the original fund and under the same terms and conditions of spend. The additional

funding of £527,000 allocated to Renfrewshire required to be spent or at least committed via a works contract by 31 March 2021. Seven projects had been identified as set out in the report following a rapid project identification exercise which had been undertaken in consultation with the Leader and Depute Leader of the Council and opposition group leaders. At the request of the Government and in consultation with the Leader of the Council, the Director of Finance & Resources had accepted by grant prior to the set deadline of 30 September 2020.

DECIDED:

(a) That the decision of the Director of Finance & Resources to accept the grant offer from the Scottish Government Town Centre Fund of £527,000 be homologated;

(b) That it be agreed to take forward the projects identified in Table 1 of the report utilising the funding award; and

(c) That authority be delegated to the Head of Regeneration in consultation with the Convener to manage any potential over/underspends from the indicative budgets presented, within the overall programme of projects, and if necessary to bring forward substitute projects to ensure the complete commitment of the grant within financial year 2020/21.

12 Scottish Government 'Regeneration Capital Grant Fund 2020/2021' : Award of Grant Funding

There was submitted a joint report by the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance & Resources relative to the Scottish Government's Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (RGCF) 2020/21.

The report intimated that the Scottish Government had announced on 10 September 2020 that funding would be available immediately through the RCGF for specific community-led regeneration projects. Formal offers of grant were received on 21 September 2020 and required to be accepted by 5 October 2020 in respect of two Renfrewshire Projects - the Johnstone Community and Wellbeing Hub delivered by Active Communities (Scotland) Limited which received £730,000 and the Mossedge Centre, Linwood, delivered by Linwood Community Development Trust which received £400,000. It was noted that local authorities had not been involved in the selection of the projects. Due to the tight timescale, the Director of Finance & Resources had accepted the grants by the 5 October deadline. Funding was made available immediately and was required to be spent or committed by 31 March 2021. A third-party contract has been prepared which Active Communities and Linwood Community Development Trust would be required to sign in order to bind the groups to the specific terms and conditions of grant and enable them to draw down the grant from the Council. The management and monitoring of the grant would be undertaken by Council officers with progress reports being submitted as required to the Scottish Government. The report sought homologation of the Director's decision to accept the funding and to coordinate delivery of the projects.

DECIDED: That the decision of the Director of Finance & Resources to accept the grant offers from the Scottish Government Regeneration Capital Grant Fund 2020/21 of £730,000 for Johnstone Community and Wellbeing Hub and £400,000 for the Mossedge Centre Linwood be homologated.

13 Paisley Townscape Heritage/ Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme: Variance to Grant Award - 44 High Street, Paisley

Under reference to item 10 of the Minute of the meeting of the Board held on 19 February 2020, there was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to a proposed variance to a third-party Town Centre Heritage/Conservation area Regeneration Scheme (TH/CARS2) project for a combined building repair and shopfront improvement project at 44 High Street, Paisley.

The report intimated that at the meeting of the Board held on 19 February 2020 a grant of up to £255,000 for building repair and shopfront improvement works to 44 High Street Paisley had been approved. The building had been identified as a priority project and was on the Buildings at Risk Register. Due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic which has increased construction costs and delayed the contract a variance of grant was required to ensure completion of the project. In addition the appointed contractor had ceased trading which had necessitated a revision to the tender costs and a new contractor appointed. The report proposed that the approved grant of up to £255,000 was increased to up to £295,000 to meet the increased costs. The variance would be met within approved budgets and any unused grant would be reallocated within the approved TH/CARS2 project.

DECIDED: That the variance to the third-party TH/CARS2 grant award as outlined in the report for works to 44 High Street, Paisley be approved, subject to approval by National Heritage Lottery Fund and Historic Environment Scotland.

14 Great Place Scheme: Project Extension, Grant Award and Community Grant Scheme

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to the Council's Great Place Scheme (the Scheme) project funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) which aimed to strengthen the network of heritage organisations throughout Renfrewshire by providing focussed support, training and event funding.

The report intimated that the project had made good progress in 2019 engaging with over 70 local organisations from across Renfrewshire. However, the Covid-19 pandemic had had a detrimental impact on these organisations resulting in a review of the Scheme and a request to NLHF for an extension of time to 31 March 2022 and additional grant funding of £50,000 to deliver the project outcomes.

The report indicated that the provision of small grants was within the scope of the Scheme project and a Community Heritage Grant Scheme had been developed based on other Council initiatives such as the Culture, Heritage and Events Fund and a budget of £35,000 was available with grants of up to £5,000 available to organisations who had registered for the Great Place Scheme and participated successfully in training offered through the Scheme.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the request for additional grant funding of £50,000 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund for the Great Place Scheme be noted;
- (b) That the proposed extended project end date of 31 March 2022 be noted; and
- (c) That the Great Place Scheme - Community Heritage Grant Scheme, set out in the report for allocating funding to local organisations for community heritage activities be approved.