

Minute of Meeting Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board

Date	Time	Venue
Wednesday, 25 August 2021	13:00	Council Chambers (Renfrewshire), Council Headquarters, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AN

Present: Councillor Jennifer Marion Adam-McGregor, Councillor Stephen Burns, Councillor Jacqueline Cameron, Councillor Michelle Campbell, Councillor Eddie Devine, Councillor Karen Devine-Kennedy, Councillor Audrey Doig, Councillor Neill Graham, Councillor John Hood, Councillor Scott Kerr, Councillor James MacLaren, Councillor Cathy McEwan, Councillor Will Mylet, Councillor Iain Nicolson, Councillor Jim Sharkey

Chair

Councillor McEwan, Convener, presided.

In Attendance

G McNeil, Director of Environment & Infrastructure; A Morrison, Head of Economy and Development Services, K Campbell, Assistant Chief Auditor and G Crawford, Senior Communications Officer (Chief Executive's); O Reid, Head of Communities & Public Protection and C Dalrymple, Communities & Regulatory Manager (both Communities & Housing Services); G Hutton, Head of Operations & Infrastructure, K Anderson, Amenity Services Manager - Waste, G Hannah, Strategic Change Manager, G Ternent, Technical Officer, S Heron, Facilities Manager (Soft Services), L Rennie, Operations Manager, D Kerr, Service Co-ordination Manager and K Gray, Streetscene Manager (all Environment & Infrastructure); and J Lynch, Head of Property Services, D Farrell, Finance Business Partner and M Ball, Service Accountant (Development and Housing Services); and K. Graham, Head of Corporate Governance, M Conaghan, Legal and Democratic Services Manager, D Pole, End User Technician, D Low, Democratic Services Manager and R Devine, E Gray and P Shiach, all Senior Committee Services Officers (all Finance & Resources).

Also In Attendance

M Ferris, Audit Scotland.

Recording of Meeting

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Convener intimated that this meeting of the Board would be webcast live on the Council's website and outlined the basic rules to be followed by participants at a hybrid meeting.

Thereafter the Clerk undertook a roll call of members in attendance at the meeting, indicating those in the Council Chamber and those participating remotely.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Burns declared a financial interest in respect of agenda item 7 - Pest Control - Update on Temporary Suspension of Charges for Vermin Treatment - as he was a Director of a pest control business. He intimated that he would leave the meeting and take no part in any discussion or voting thereon.

1 Minute of Community Asset Transfer Review Sub-committee

There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Community Asset Transfer Review Sub-committee held on 18 June 2021.

DECIDED: That the Minute be approved.

2 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring as at 25 June 2021

There was submitted a joint Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring report by the Directors of Finance & Resources, Environment & Infrastructure and Communities & Housing Services for the period 1 April to 25 June 2021.

The report stated that the projected revenue outturn as at 31 March 2022 for all services reporting to this Policy Board was an overspend position of £2.954 million against the revised budget for the year, with £3.205 million of expenditure directly attributable to the Covid-19 pandemic response. The projected capital outturn as at 31 March 2022 for projects reporting to the Board was a breakeven position against the revised budget for the year. Summaries were provided over the relevant services in the tables within the report, together with further analysis. It was noted that for financial year 2021/22 the projected outturn position was split into core and Covid-19 related variances.

The report highlighted revenue budget adjustments totalling £903,000 since the budget was approved on 4 March 2021 with £160,000 relating to budget realignments for services relating to other Policy Boards and £700,000 relating to the drawing down of agreed revenue funding for Environment & Place and memorial safety. In addition it was noted that there had been capital budget adjustments of £6.198 million since the previous report, comprising of £2.447 million carry forward from the 2020/21 budget, a budget increase of £1.961 million and budget transfers totalling £1.790 million.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the projected Revenue outturn position as detailed in table 1 of the report, acknowledging that the forecast position was based on best estimates at this point in time, 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 in sections 4 and 6 of the report, be noted.

3 Operational Performance Report

There was submitted a joint report by the Directors of Environment & Infrastructure and Communities & Housing Services relative to operational performance.

The report provided updates since the previous Board meeting in respect of key areas delivered by services within Environment & Infrastructure, which were within the remit of this Policy Board. It also outlined the areas of priority through to autumn 2021, highlighting key areas of focus and plans for next steps to support the Council's recovery plans. Whilst developing these plans, the local and national position remained fluid and services would remain flexible and able to respond quickly in relation to changes in restrictions and local outbreaks as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The report stated that operational services had continued within Covid-19 restrictions and that services were being delivered in most instances to levels similar to those experienced by services in a pre-covid environment. It was noted that all required safety measures were in place and well established.

The report also set out proposals to extend the suspension of car parking charges in the Council owned car parks of Paisley town centre until the end of October 2021, the continuation of the Household Waste Recycling Centre open times and operational arrangements which were put in place since re-opening after lockdown in June 2020 and the expansion of trade waste collections to seven days per week.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the content of the report be approved;
- (b) That the suspension of car parking charges in the Council owned Car Parks of Paisley Town Centre, as set out in paragraph 4.9.1 of the report, be approved;
- (c) That the Household Waste Recycling Centre's open times and operational arrangements, as set out in paragraph 4.14.5 of the report, be approved; and
- (d) That it be noted that Trade Waste collections would now be available to businesses seven days per week, as set out in paragraph 4.14.6 of the report.

4 Outdoor Access and Play Area Improvements 2021- 2022 Investment Programme

There was submitted a report by the Director of Environment & Infrastructure relative to the outdoor access and play area improvements.

The report made reference to the decision taken at the meeting of this Policy Board on 26 May 2021 which set out planned investment of £2.284 million to support improvements in outdoor access and play areas over the next two financial years. The report also referenced a £158,000 capital grant award which the Council had received from the Scottish Government for 2021/22 to support the renewal of playparks which would be used to enhance the funding previously agreed by Council.

The report provided details on two programmes of work which would be carried out during 2021/22. The first, renewal of play areas, set out to completely renew 14 play areas across all electoral wards in Renfrewshire and the second, a refurbishment programme, to replace infrastructure at seven play areas. Details were also provided around additional funding which would be used to provide additional infrastructure, such as bicycle and scooter stands and ensure, where appropriate, routes in and around play areas were accessible.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the programme of works for renewal and refurbishment of play areas, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report, be approved;
- (b) That the Capital Grant Allocation of £158,000 for 2021/2022 from Scottish Government for investment in the renewal of play areas in Renfrewshire be noted; and
- (c) That it be noted that a second phase of the play area renewal and refurbishment programme for delivery in 2022/23 would be submitted to this policy board at a future meeting.

5 **Traffic Calming Oxford Road, Renfrew**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Environment & Infrastructure relative to a petition, signed by 60 people which requested that traffic calming measures be installed to reduce excessive speeding and to deter Oxford Road, Renfrew being used as a shortcut by larger vehicles and HGV vehicles.

The report provided details of a speeding assessment carried out on Oxford Road, the criteria which would result in further action being taken by the Council and the petition statement which set out the action already undertaken by the petitioner to resolve the matter and their recommendations. The report indicated that the Council considered further action to be necessary if the 85th percentile speed of surveyed vehicles exceeded the posted speed limit. The results of the speeding assessment found that 85th percentile speed on Oxford Road, which had a posted speed limit of 30mph, was recorded as 29mph.

DECIDED: It was agreed that, as the 85th percentile speed did not exceed the posted speed limit of 30 mph, no further action be taken and that the petitioner be notified accordingly.

6 **Business Regulation Service Plan 2021-22 – Recovery from COVID**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Communities & Housing Services relative to the annual service plan to detail the work being undertaken in relation to the regulation of food law across Renfrewshire as required by Food Standards Scotland.

The report provided details on the Business Regulation Service Plan for 2021/22 and set out the work to be undertaken by the service, resource requirements, the format and detail in relation to quality assurance required by Food Standards Scotland and a proposed catch up programme of food law inspections following the period during the Covid-19 pandemic.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the resources required to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic and to complete the associated catch-up programme of food inspections be noted; and
- (b) That the Business Regulation Service Plan for 2021/22, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

Declaration of Interest

Councillor Burns having previously declared an interest in the following item of business took no part in the discussion or decision.

7 Pest Control - Update on Temporary Suspension of Charges for Vermin Treatment

Under reference to item 9 of the Minute of the meeting of the Council held on 13 May 2021 there was submitted a report by the Director of Communities & Housing Services relative to the temporary suspension of charges for vermin treatment.

The report referred to the Notice of Motion approved at the meeting of the Council held on 13 May 2021 in connection with the temporary suspension of charges for vermin treatment and provided an update in relation to the impact on service delivery. The report advised that there had been an increase in service requests, particularly where the caller had seen rodents but was not experiencing any infestation within their property. Details were provided on the increased cost to the service due to the loss of income, additional work which required to be passed to a private pest control contractor and an analysis of the service requests which illustrated that while there had been reports of an increase in rodent sightings during the pandemic lockdown period, there was no evidence to suggest that the overall number of rodents or infestations had been increasing.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the impact on service delivery as a result of the cancellation of pest control charges for rodent treatment be noted;
- (b) That the analysis undertaken which indicated that there was no evidence of increased infestation of vermin during or following the pandemic lockdown period be noted;
- (c) That, in view of both the service impact and the lack of evidence of increased level of infestation, the removal of the temporary suspension of charges be approved;
- (d) That it be noted that Council tenants would continue to receive pest control services which were recharged to the Housing Revenue Account; and

(e) That it be noted that the reintroduction of charges would increase the capacity of officers and the service to respond to calls related to communal property and public areas which would continue on a non-chargeable basis.

8 Audited Annual Accounts 2020/21 – Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park Authority

There was submitted a report by the Director of Finance & Resources relative to Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park Authority's audited annual accounts for 2021/22.

The report noted that the Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park Authority Joint Committee terminated on 31 March 2021 and that delegated authority was given to the Director of Finance & Resources (as Treasurer to the former Joint Committee) to submit the 2020/21 unaudited annual accounts of the Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park Authority to external audit. This was done on 17 May 2021. The report set out the accounts as reviewed by Audit Scotland, the appointed auditor, along with their Annual Audit Report and the process which would be followed when distributing the the remaining assets, liabilities and reserves.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the audited Annual Accounts 2020/21 be approved for signature; and
- (b) That the delegation of authority to senior officers in Renfrewshire Council and Inverclyde Council to agree how the assets, liabilities and reserves would be distributed be approved.

9 Clyde Muirshiel Park Authority – Internal Audit Annual Report

There was submitted a report by the Chief Auditor relative to Clyde Muirshiel Park Authority's Internal Audit Report for 2020/21 as required by the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

The report provided details on the performance of the Internal Audit Team, the main findings from the internal audit work undertaken in 2020/21 and the audit assurance statement.

DECIDED: That the contents of the Internal Audit Annual Report be noted.

10 Paisley Museum – Excambion with SP Distribution PLC

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to an area of ground at the Paisley Museum.

The report outlined proposals to declare the land surplus, enter into an excambion agreement with SP Distribution to construct a new electricity sub-station to serve the museum, to decommission the old sub-station and return the land on which it was situated to the Council. A location plan detailing the two plots of land was included in the report.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the 25 square metres, outlined in red on the drawing included in the report, be declared surplus;
- (b) That it be noted that the 25 square metres would then be exchanged for the 22 square metres shown outlined in blue on the drawing included in the report; and
- (c) That it be noted that the terms and conditions for the Excambion would be finalised and approved by the Head of Economy and Development in consultation with the Head of Corporate Governance in terms of the Scheme of Delegated Functions along with supplementary documentation required to complete the transaction.

11 Community Asset Transfer Return (1st April 2020 – 31st March 2021)

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to the Community Asset Transfer report for the period from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 produced in accordance with the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

The report summarised the Council's Community Asset Transfer process and listed the applications which had been determined between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2020. Details were also provided on the 11 assets where interests had been noted between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021.

The report also provided details on two full applications which had been considered by the Officer Asset Transfer Panel. Friends of Howwood Park applied for a ten-year lease of Howwood Park Pavilion and this was approved and the lease authorised by this policy board on 21 January 2021. UP2US applied for a three-year lease of Barnbrock Farm, Bridge of Weir with an agreed purchase price of £350,000 upon the expiry of the lease which was refused. The application was subsequently withdrawn following its referral to the Community Asset Transfer Sub-Committee.

It was also noted that during the reporting period there were no appeals in terms of Section 85 and one review request in terms of Section 86 of the Act in respect of refusals or conditional acceptances of asset transfer requests.

DECIDED: That the the Community Asset Transfer Return for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 be approved and published on the Council's website.