

Minute of Meeting Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board

| Date | Time | Venue |
|--------------------------|-------|---------------------------|
| Wednesday, 24 March 2021 | 13:00 | Microsoft TEAMS Platform, |

Present

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

Chair

Councillor McEwan, Convener, presided.

In Attendance

G McNeil, Director of Environment & Infrastructure; K Waters, Programme Manager (City Deal) (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, K Gray, Streetscene Manager, D Kerr, Service Co-ordination Manager, S Heron, Facilities Manager (Soft Services) and L Rennie, Operations Manager (all Environment & Infrastructure); and K Graham, Head of Corporate Governance, J Lynch, Head of Property Services, G Dickie, Partnering & Commissioning Manager, D Pole, End User Technician, F Hughes, Asset Manager, D Farrell, Finance Business Partner and R Devine and C MacDonald, both Senior Committee Services Officers (all Finance & Resources).

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 view on the Council's website.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Hood declared an interest in agenda item 8 – Community Asset Transfer: Request for Review Barnbrock Farm – Application by UP-2-US Ltd as he was a user of the group who had made the community asset transfer request and indicated that he would take no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

1 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report

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 2020 to 8 January 2021.

The report stated that the projected revenue outturn as at 31 March 2021 for all services reporting to this Policy Board was an overspend position of £2.698 million against the revised budget for the year. The projected capital outturn as at 31 March 2021 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 2020/21 the projected outturn position was split into core and Covid-19 related variances. It was highlighted that budget adjustments totalling £0.633 million, comprising budget carry forwards from 2020/21 to 2021/22 of £0.350 million in the Roads/Footways Upgrade Programme; £0.044 million for the Bridge Assessment/Strengthening budget; £0.130 million for the Lighting Columns Replacement Programme; and £0.020 million in respect of the Multi-purpose Bins trial, together with an increase in the 2021/22 Vehicle Replacement Programme of £0.048 million, had been processed since consideration of the previous report.

DECIDED:

(a) That the projected Revenue outturn position as detailed in table 1 of the report be noted, acknowledging that the forecast position was based on best estimates and confirmed government support at this point in time, that forecasts were likely to be subject to considerable fluctuation as the full service implications and associated costs of the pandemic became clearer;

(b) That the projected Capital outturn position, detailed in table 2 of the report, be noted; and

(c) That the budget adjustments, detailed in section 5 of the report, be noted.

2 Operational Performance Report

There was submitted an update report by the Director of Environment & Infrastructure 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 Summer 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 continued within Covid-19 restrictions and 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.

Reference was made within the report to the decision taken at the meeting of the Emergencies Board held on 27 March 2020 when the initial national lockdown had commenced that charges in Council-owned car parks be suspended to support key workers to undertake their duties and the decision taken at the meeting of this Policy Board held on 27 January 2021 to continue the suspension of charges in view of the lockdown restrictions imposed. The report proposed that due to the continuation of restrictions the suspension of charges in Council-owned car parks be extended to the end of May 2021.

Councillor McEwan, seconded by Councillor Don, moved that the suspension of charges until the end of May 2021 in Council-owned car parks in Paisley Town Centre, as detailed in paragraph 4.4 of the report, be agreed and that otherwise the report be noted.

Councillor MacLaren, seconded by Councillor Graham, moved that in addition "a report be brought back to the Board on the cost and use of LitterCam as seen on the BBC. It automatically spots when someone throws rubbish out of their vehicle, down to the size of a cigarette butt, and automatically issues a fine. This is currently being used by Maidstone Borough Council." This was agreed.

DECIDED:

(a) That the suspension of charges until the end of May 2021 in Council owned car parks in Paisley Town Centre, as detailed in paragraph 4.4 of the report, be agreed;

(b) That a report be submitted to a future meeting of this Policy Board be brought back to the Board on the cost and use of LitterCam as seen on the BBC. It automatically spots when someone throws rubbish out of their vehicle, down to the size of a cigarette butt, and automatically issues a fine. This is currently being used by Maidstone Borough Council; and

(c) That otherwise the content of the report be noted.

3(a) Service Delivery Plan 2021/22 - Environment & Infrastructure

There was submitted an update report by the Director of Environment & Infrastructure relative to the Service Delivery Plan 2021/22 for Environment & Infrastructure.

The report advised that typically, Services reported on their performance and intended improvement actions through Service Improvement Plans. The Service Delivery Plan sat beneath the Council Plan, Community Plan, and alongside the Risk Management Plan and the People Strategy to form a suite of documents which provided the strategic direction for the Service. The Plan also complemented the Council-wide Economic Recovery Plan and Social Renewal Plan.

The report indicated that the Covid-19 pandemic had impacted significantly on how services were delivered, on the needs of the community and consequently, services had produced Service Delivery Plans for 2021/22 which outlined the actions that would be taken to assist in recovery over the next 12-month period. The Council however remained aspirational and the Plan also reflected a commitment from Environment & Infrastructure to continuous improvement and to deliver a wide range of ambitious improvement programmes and projects. The Plan detailed the priorities being addressed; the key tasks to be implemented; the implementation timetable and measures of success. A six-monthly update on progress of the Service Delivery Plan would be submitted to the appropriate Policy Boards in Autumn 2021, and an outturn report submitted in early Summer 2022.

DECIDED:

- (i) That the elements of the Service Delivery Plan 2021/22 – Environment & Infrastructure which fall within the remit of this Policy Board be approved;
- (ii) That it be agreed that the mid-year progress of the Service Delivery Plan be submitted to this Policy Board in Autumn 2021 and an outturn report in early Summer 2022; and
- (iii) That it be noted that the Service Delivery Plan 2021/22 - Environment & Infrastructure would be submitted to the meeting of the Finance, Resources & Customer Services Policy Board to be held on 31 March 2021 for approval of the elements of the Plan within that Board's remit.

3(b) Service Delivery Plan 2021/22: Communities & Housing Services

There was submitted a report by the Director of Communities & Housing Services relative to the Service Delivery Plan 2021/22 for Communities and Housing Services.

The report advised that typically, Services reported on their performance and intended improvement actions through Service Improvement Plans. The Service Delivery Plan sat beneath the Council Plan, Community Plan, and alongside the Risk Management Plan and the People Strategy to form a suite of documents which provided the strategic direction for the Service. The Plan also complemented the Council-wide Economic Recovery Plan and Social Renewal Plan.

The report indicated that the Covid-19 pandemic had impacted significantly on how services were delivered, on the needs of the community and consequently, services had produced Service Delivery Plans for 2021/22 which outlined the actions that would be taken to assist in recovery over the next 12-month period. The Council however remained aspirational and the Plan also reflected a commitment from Communities & Housing Services to continuous improvement and to deliver a wide range of ambitious improvement programmes and projects. The Plan detailed the priorities being addressed; the key tasks to be implemented; the implementation timetable and measures of success. A six-monthly update on progress of the Service Delivery Plan would be submitted to the appropriate Policy Boards in Autumn 2021, and an outturn report submitted in early Summer 2022

DECIDED:

- (i) That the elements of the Service Delivery Plan 2021/22 - Communities & Housing

Services which fall within the remit of this Policy Board be approved;

(ii) That it be agreed that the mid-year progress of the Service Delivery Plan be submitted to this Policy Board in Autumn 2021 and an outturn report in early Summer 2022; and

(iii) That it be noted that the Service Delivery Plan 2021/22 - Communities & Housing Services had been submitted to the meeting of the Communities, Housing & Planning Policy Board held on 16 March 2021 for approval of the elements of the Plan within that Board's remit.

4 Covid-19 - The Regulation of Businesses During the Pandemic

There was submitted a report by the Director of Communities & Housing Services relative to the regulation of businesses during the pandemic.

The report referenced previous Service update reports submitted to this Policy Board which highlighted that Environmental Health and Trading Standards had been at the forefront of public health interventions to prevent the onward transmission of Covid-19. The report outlined work undertaken to date with regards to businesses, the close working relationship being maintained with both the national expert group and Police Scotland and the proactive approach taken in the Renfrewshire area to ensure compliance with the constantly changing legislation, guidance and Frameworks. In this connection statistical data was provided in relation to local Service demands and enforcement action undertaken since March 2020 together with a summary of future action and approaches which would be adopted.

DECIDED:

(a) That the update on the work undertaken within the Regulatory services teams of Communities and Public Protection be noted; and

(b) That the Board supported the on-going work by ensuring communities were aware of business compliance to date.

5 Infrastructure & Assets Community Investment Fund

There was submitted a report by the Director of Environment & Infrastructure relative to the development and delivery of an Infrastructure and Assets Community Investment Fund.

The report stated that the fund would seek to involve communities to submit proposals and make decisions on investments in infrastructure and assets within their local areas through participatory budgeting. It was noted that over a three-year period £1.2 million from the Roads Capital Investment Programme, 5% of the total Programme, would be allocated specifically for the fund. The funding was designed to be flexible and, dependent on the need and nature of the projects suggested and it was highlighted that there was potentially an opportunity to supplement the funding from the Council's Capital resources or funding from external providers. To ensure all areas benefited from this investment, proposals would be submitted for every area of Renfrewshire, with local communities shaping the investments that would bring benefits and improvements within their local area. Reference was made within the

report to the current Covid-19 restrictions, and the consequential requirement to think differently and innovatively about the way in which local people were able to engage in the process, with specific focus on engaging with people who might be more unlikely to participate or face barriers in terms of participation. It was noted that it would be important to adapt approaches and to continue to do so in response to feedback given, with consultation undertaken on an ongoing basis over a period of time. A public communications and marketing plan would be developed to promote the project, as detailed in section 4 of the report.

The funding process would involve three phases, with residents invited to share their initial ideas for infrastructure improvements in the first phase. In phase two this original long list of projects would be shortlisted against the criteria outlined in section 3.6 of the report and then in the third phase local communities would be involved in voting on the projects that they would like to see implemented in their community. A summary of the anticipated timeline was provided.

DECIDED: That the implementation plan as outlined in section 3 of the report be implemented and that it be noted that regular update reports would be submitted to future meetings of this Policy Board.

6 Review of Grass Cutting

There was submitted a report by the Director of Environment & Infrastructure relative to the grass cutting service and proposed approach to service delivery across Renfrewshire effective from 5 April 2021.

The report highlighted that the Council's greenspace had a key role to play in supporting the quality of Renfrewshire as a place for communities, residents and businesses and of increasing weight, its role in supporting the Council's ambitions to tackle climate change.

The Council's grass cutting service had been suspended during March 2020 as the country had entered lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic and was only able to restart under the Government's "Routemap" on 1 June 2020. Thereafter the re-introduction of grass cutting on a phased basis, was delivered on a community by community basis around Renfrewshire. This largely geographical approach during the restrictions had provided an insight and the direction for a review in how grass cutting was delivered across Renfrewshire and had shaped the proposed move to a fully geographical approach. Engagement had also been undertaken across communities in relation to both grass cutting frequencies, areas maintained and the wider biodiversity agenda.

As a result, it was proposed that going forward into the 2021 grass cutting season, the delivery of grass cutting services in Renfrewshire change to a single 14-day cyclic schedule on a community by community basis. Benefits of introduction of the proposal were outlined within the report.

DECIDED: That the changes to the 2021 grass cutting service, moving to a geographical based model where grass would be maintained through a single programme of cyclic maintenance, as detailed in the report, be approved.

7 Scottish Government Consultation: Protecting Scotland's Groundwater from Pollution

There was submitted a report by the Director of Communities & Housing Services relative to the consultation undertaken by the Scottish Government, in conjunction with the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), on proposals to improve how groundwater in Scotland was protected.

The report outlined proposals to revise environmental standards for substances within groundwater; revised the list of groundwater hazardous substances which required to be prevented from entering groundwater; and amended land contamination legislation. The proposed response to the consultation, prepared on behalf of the Council, was appended to the report. It was highlighted that SEPA was also consulting on revisions to their guidance documents on 'Land Contamination and Impacts on the Water Environment' and 'Assigning Groundwater Assessment Criteria for Pollutant Inputs'. Both of the aforementioned documents were referred to within the Scottish Government consultation paper and were to be considered in conjunction with the consultation as they were intrinsically linked. The two SEPA consultation documents were of a technical nature and it was noted that officers would submit responses to those documents directly.

DECIDED:

(a) That the consultation on Protecting Scotland's Groundwater from pollution, along with the requirement to respond by 31 March 2021 be noted; and

(b) That the proposed response, attached as Appendix 1 to the report, be approved as the Council's consultation response.

Declaration of Interest

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

8 Community Asset Transfer- Request for Review Barnbrock Farm- Application by UP-2-US Ltd.

There was submitted a report by the Director of Finance & Resources relative to a request for a review of a decision by the Head of Property Services to refuse an Asset Transfer Request by Up-2-U's Limited in respect of their application for the transfer of Barnbrock Farm.

The report advised that the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 included provisions enabling community bodies to apply to the Council to take over Council-owned land and facilities, referred to in the Act as an Asset Transfer Request. The Act detailed the manner that the Council required to deal with Asset Transfer requests with Regulations establishing the procedures to be followed. At the meeting of the Council held on 23 February 2017, the process for dealing with such applications had been agreed. As part of that decision, it was agreed that applications would be determined in the first instance by the Head of Property Services. The 2015 Act prescribed that where an applicant was not satisfied with the outcome of their request

the Council must provide for a review process. The report indicated that the Council had received a request from Up-2-Us Limited for a review of a decision by the Head of Property Services to refuse an Asset Transfer Request in respect of their application for the transfer of Barnbrock Farm. Information in respect of the Asset Transfer request was provided together with details of the proposed composition of the Community Asset Transfer Review Sub-committee. The proposed procedures for considering the review were appended to the report.

DECIDED:

(a) That it be noted that a request had been received for a review of a decision to refuse an asset transfer request, made in terms of Part 5 the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015;

(b) That it be noted that the review would be considered by the Community Asset Transfer Review Sub-committee;

(c) That Councillors J Cameron, Devine, Audrey Doig, Graham and McEwan be appointed as members of the Sub-committee to consider the review and that Councillor McEwan be appointed as the Chair of the Sub-committee;

(d) That the Chair of the Sub-Committee be authorised, in consultation with the Head of Corporate Governance, to set the date and make all necessary arrangements for the inaugural meeting of the Sub-committee; and

(e) That the procedure for dealing with the review, as detailed in the Appendix to the report, be agreed.

9 Lease of property - 24 Skye Crescent, Paisley

There was submitted a report by the Director of Finance & Resources relative to the proposed lease of the property at 24 Skye Crescent, Paisley.

The report advised that Helena Blessing, had leased the shop property at 24 Skye Crescent, Paisley, identified on the plan appended to the report, since November 2010 for use as a dental practice. The current annual rental for the property, agreed in 2010, was £5,750 and the lease had been granted on a year to year basis. Ms Blessing had requested security of tenure and discussions had taken place regarding the proposed terms and conditions of a new lease. The report detailed the proposed main terms and conditions of the lease provisionally agreed.

DECIDED: That the Head of Property Services be authorised, in consultation with the Head of Corporate Governance, to conclude a new lease of the shop property at 24 Skye Crescent, Paisley on the terms and conditions detailed in the report.

10 Disposal of Land at Albert Road, Renfrew

There was submitted a report by the Director of Finance & Resources relative to the proposed disposal of land at Albert Road, Renfrew, identified on location plan E3101, a copy of which was appended to the report.

The report advised that Renfrewshire's Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2019/20 –

2023/24 had been approved at the meeting of the Communities Housing & Planning Policy Board held on 30 October 2018 and detailed how investment in affordable housing would be targeted to achieve the objectives of the Local Housing Strategy. The Plan had been developed following consultation and engagement with Community Planning partners, including the Housing Associations operating in Renfrewshire. Williamsburgh Housing Association had been identified within the Plan as the partner for the development of the site at Albert Road, Renfrew and intended to develop 42 new affordable homes on the site. Discussions had been entered into between the Housing Association and Council regarding the proposed main terms and conditions of the lease details of which were outlined in the report.

DECIDED: That the Head of Property Services be authorised, in consultation with the Head of Corporate Governance, to dispose of the land at Albert Road, Renfrew identified on location plan E3101 appended to the report, to Williamsburgh Housing Association, on the terms and conditions detailed in the report.

11 AMIDS District Heat Network - New Lease from Scottish Water

There was submitted a joint report by the Chief Executive and Director of Finance & Resources relative to the proposed lease with Scottish Water, for an Energy Centre and associated pipework within the Laighpark Wastewater Treatment Works.(WWTW)

The report advised that responding to the climate emergency had resulted in ambitious targets to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045 to end Scotland's contribution to climate change within a generation. It was noted that the Council had also declared a climate emergency with ambitious targets which included a pledge to work proactively with others to make Renfrewshire carbon neutral by 2030. In this connection the report stated that it was proposed to install a District Heating Network for the AMIDS site, consisting of an Energy Centre and pipework to connect supplies to customers. The proposed Energy Centre would be constructed on land owned by Scottish Water within the WWTW. It was highlighted that a low carbon district heat solution would provide a significant opportunity for AMIDS and Renfrewshire, to reduce future carbon emissions and enhance the reputation of the site whilst acting as a demonstration to the rest of Scotland of how a transition to a low carbon future could be achieved. The funding for the AMIDS District Heating Network project had been approved at the meeting of the Leadership Board held on 2 December 2020 when it had also been agreed that associated land acquisition and assets requirements would be submitted to the this Policy Board for approval. The report detailed the proposed main terms and conditions of the lease provisionally agreed.

DECIDED: That the Head of Property Services be authorised, in consultation with the Head of Corporate Governance, to negotiate terms and enter into a lease with Scottish Water for an Energy Centre and associated pipework within the Laighpark Wastewater Treatment Works.

12 Amendment to Lease for Aird Meadow, Lochwinnoch

There was submitted a report by the Director of Finance & Resources relative to the proposed terms and conditions agreed to amend the existing lease between the Council and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) in respect of Aird

Meadow, Lochwinoch.

The report advised that the Council currently leased Aird Meadow, Lochwinnoch, identified on the plan appended to the report, to the RSPB for use as a nature reserve, in terms of a 99-year lease containing a mutual break option, which could be exercised on provision of two- years' prior written notice. The lease had commenced on 1 December 1973. The former Peel Tower, a historic building which was in ruins was located within the leased area. The RSPB had secured grant funding from Historic Environment Scotland and National Lottery Heritage Fund for the sum of £120,000, to reveal Peel Tower, which would involve consolidation of the ruins, installation of signage, investigation of the archaeological rubble and removal of invasive and non-invasive plant species. To secure the grant funding and pursue other grant funding options the RSPB required security of tenure by the removal of the current mutual break option from the lease, which would result in the RSPB having a lease of the area for 51 years. The report stated that all other terms of the lease would remain the same.

DECIDED: That the Head of Property Services be authorised, in consultation with the Head of Corporate Governance, to conclude an amendment to the existing lease on the terms and conditions detailed within the report.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Board resolved that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business as it was likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted that if members of the press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 6 and 9 of part I of schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

13 Option Agreement Field Adjacent to Neilston Substation, Glennifer Braes

There was submitted a report by the Director Finance & Resources relative to the terms and conditions agreed with a proposed tenant for an option agreement in respect of an area of land adjacent to Neilston Substation, Gleniffer Braes and identified on a plan appended to the report.

DECIDED: That the Head of Property Services be authorised, in consultation with the Head of Corporate Governance, to conclude an option agreement with the applicant on the terms and conditions contained within the report.