

Minute of Meeting Council

Date	Time	Venue
Thursday, 04 March 2021	09:30	Teams Meeting,

Present: Councillor Jennifer Marion Adam-McGregor, Councillor Tom Begg, Councillor Derek Bibby, Councillor Bill Binks, Councillor Bill Brown, Councillor Stephen Burns, Councillor Jacqueline Cameron, Provost Lorraine Cameron, Councillor Michelle Campbell, Councillor Carolann Davidson, Councillor Eddie Devine, Councillor Andy Doig, Councillor Audrey Doig, Councillor Natalie Don, Councillor Alison Jean Dowling, Councillor Edward Grady, Councillor Neill Graham, Councillor Jim Harte, Councillor John Hood, Councillor Lisa-Marie Hughes, Councillor Karen Kennedy, Councillor Scott Kerr, Councillor Alistair Mackay, Councillor James MacLaren, Councillor Kenny MacLaren, Councillor Mags MacLaren, Councillor Eileen McCartin, Councillor Colin McCulloch, Councillor Cathy McEwan, Councillor Marie McGurk, Councillor John McIntyre, Councillor John McNaughtan, Councillor Kevin Montgomery, Councillor Will Mylet, Councillor Iain Nicolson, Councillor Jim Paterson, Councillor Emma Rodden, Councillor Jim Sharkey, Councillor John Shaw, Councillor James Sheridan, Councillor Andy Steel, Councillor Jane Strang, Councillor Paul Mack

In Attendance

S Black, Chief Executive; S Quinn, Director of Children's Services; M Crearie, Director of Communities & Housing Services; G McNeil, Director of Environment & Infrastructure; A Russell, Director of Finance & Resources; L McIntyre, Head of Policy & Commissioning, L Mahon, Head of Marketing & Communications, A Morrison, Head of Economy & Development Services, B Walker, City Deal Project Director, L Adamson, Communications & Public Affairs Manager and D Christie, Senior Communications Officer (all Chief Executive's); J Calder, Head of Service (Early Years & Broad General Education), G McKinlay, Head of Schools (Senior Phase & Inclusion) and J Trainer, Head of Child Care & Criminal Justice (all Children's Services); F Carlin, Head of Housing Services, L Feeley, Housing Asset & Investment Manager and L Muirhead, Planning & Housing Manager (all Communities & Housing Services); K Graham, Head of Corporate Governance, A MacArthur, Head of Finance, S Muir, Finance Business Partner, M Conaghan, Legal & Democratic Services Manager, L Belshaw and D Low, both Democratic Services Managers, G Dickie, Partnering & Commissioning Manager, S Milligan, Service Desk/Remote Support Team Leader, I Blair, A Lowe and D Pole, End User Technicians and R Devine and C MacDonald, both Senior Committee Services Officers (all Finance & Resources); S Strachan, Interim Chief Officer, C Laverty, Head of Mental Health, Learning Disabilities & Addictions (both Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership); and V Hollows, Chief Executive (Renfrewshire Leisure Limited).

Chair

Provost L Cameron presided.

Recording of meeting

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

Obituaries

Provost Cameron acknowledged the recent deaths of Bob Brothers, a former Renfrew District Councillor and Rayleen Kelly, a former Renfrewshire Councillor, expressed deepest sympathy and offered the Council's support to both families.

During recollections of Rayleen's spell as a Councillor reference was made to her lovely, gentle, and kind demeanor. Mention was also made to Bob's time as a Councillor and specifically to his personality. Individual members of the Council paid tribute to both individuals endorsing the sentiments expressed. The Provost and members of the Council extended sincere condolences to both families on behalf of Renfrewshire Council.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Campbell declared an interest in respect of items 2, 7 and 12 of the agenda as she was an employee of NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde but not in the Council's area and a voluntary Covid vaccinator and intimated that it was her intention to remain in the meeting and to take part in any discussion or voting thereon.

Councillor Dowling declared an interest in respect of item 2 of the agenda as she was a Director of Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau and intimated that it was her intention to leave the meeting and take no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

Councillor Montgomery declared an interest in respect of item 2 of the agenda as he was a former employee of Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau and intimated that it was his intention to leave the meeting and take no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

Councillors McIntyre and J MacLaren declared an interest in respect of item 2 of the agenda as they were private landlords and intimated that it was their intention to remain in the meeting and to take part in any discussion or voting thereon.

Councillor Mackay declared an interest in respect of item 2 of the agenda as he was a Council Tax payer and intimated that it was his intention to remain in the meeting and to take part in any discussion or voting thereon.

Statement by Head of Corporate Governance

The Head of Corporate Governance advised that members did not require to declare an interest in relation to their being Council Tax payers as there was a general exclusion in the Code of Conduct for Councillors.

Councillors Hughes, McCartin and Begg declared an interest in respect of item 10 of the agenda as they were members of the Board of Renfrewshire Leisure Limited and indicated that it was their intention to leave the meeting and take no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

1 Minutes of Meetings of Council, Boards and Panels

There were submitted the Minutes of the following meetings of the Council, Boards and Panels on the dates specified:

Council, 17 December 2020
Communities, Housing & Planning Policy Board, 19 January 2021
Regulatory Functions Board, 20 January 2021
Education & Children's Services Policy Board, 21 January 2021
Audit, Risk & Scrutiny Board, 25 January 2021
Special Communities, Housing & Planning Policy Board, 26 January 2021
Infrastructure, Land & Environment Policy Board, 27 January 2021
Petitions Board, 1 February 2021
Local Review Body, 2 February 2021
Finance, Resources & Customer Services Policy Board, 3 February 2021
Regulatory Functions Board, 4 February 2021
Placing Requests & Exclusions Appeals Panel, 23 February 2021
Leadership Board, 24 February 2021

DECIDED: That the Minutes be approved.

Prior to consideration of the following items of business the Provost drew Members' attention to the provisions of Section 112 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 which restricted the voting rights of Members on certain issues if they were in arrears with Council Tax payments.

Copies of the procedures to be followed in respect of consideration of the Revenue Estimates and Council Tax (item 2 of the agenda); and the Housing Revenue Account Budgets, Rent Levels and Capital Investment Plans (item 4 of the agenda) were appended to the relevant reports.

2 Revenue Budget and Council Tax 2021/22

There was submitted a report by the Director of Finance & Resources relative to the Revenue Budget and Council Tax for 2021/22, together with appendices detailing revenue estimates for 2020/21; estimates of expenditure and income for the year

ended 31 March 2022; and the General Fund probable outturn for 2020/21.

The report provided an overview of the Council's anticipated financial position on the General Fund revenue budget and set out the information required for the Council to set its budget and Council Tax for 2021/22. The report also recommended that councillors considered the immediate and medium-term financial context for the Council, the legacy impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on service costs and demands and income streams, the significant disruption to transformation plans, the need for the Council to support the social and economic recovery and renewal process, together with the ongoing financial pressures facing the public sector more generally all as detailed in the report. The report stated that the Scottish Government had not provided detailed spending plans beyond their draft budget for 2021/22 but had through its Medium-term Financial Strategy (MTFS) outlined where it expected to position the local government budget relative to other main areas of their overall budget, most notably spending on the NHS. Within this MTFS, local government had been positioned more positively than in previous years relative to other major areas of the public sector in Scotland. This would imply a greater potential for a more positive relative financial outlook than forecast previously. The report highlighted however that the Scottish Government's own high-level forecast of overall future revenue spending in Scotland over the medium term was highly uncertain following the unprecedented fall in economic output as well as the uncertainty over the future scale and pace of economic recovery at both a Scottish and UK level.

Reference was also made within the report to the significant disruption to the normal budget setting cycle following the economic impact that had emerged from the Covid-19 pandemic. Consequently, the UK budget which would normally have been announced in the autumn of 2020, had been delayed and announced on 3 March 2021 by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. This resulted in the draft Scottish Government budget being published on 28 January 2021, prior to the UK Government budget for the second year in a row.

The key elements of the Council's revenue settlement were summarised within the report and included an increase, in cash terms, in the Council's Government Revenue Grant Settlement of £9.335 million (2.7%); the inclusion within the Council's settlement of approximately £2.210 million of resources for Scottish Government priorities and commitments which drove a corresponding growth in Council spending; £3.019 million of conditional grant funding linked to the Council committing to a Council Tax freeze; the requirement for the Council to forward around £2.323 million of funding for Social Care to the Integration Joint Board (IJB), as Children's Social Care and Criminal Justice was not delegated to the IJB in Renfrewshire. Comparison, on a like for like basis, following adjustment for the areas of growing responsibility and the conditional aspects of the settlement, to the 2020/21 settlement indicated an increase of £1.783 million (0.5%) to the Council's underlying core grant.

In addition to the normal revenue settlement, the Scottish Government had also confirmed non-recurring Covid-19 specific funding for local government as part of the 2021/22 budget settlement although the distribution of resources to individual council level has yet to be confirmed, together with a further £60 million for local government for the safe reopening of schools and education catch up and £100 million to support low income households.

The report stated that in setting previous budgets, the Council had decided not to apply any general inflationary uplift to non-pay budgets. Given the financial challenges facing the Council, over the medium term and in line with historic practice, general

non-pay inflation was not provided for in the 2021/22 budget. The Financial Regulations required charges for services to be reviewed at least annually. The overview of the Council's spending, outlined in Table 3 of the report, made provision of £0.101 million for an inflation adjustment to charges of 2%.

Councillor Shaw, seconded by Councillor Nicolson, moved:

"1. That this Administration's fourth budget will continue to deliver on its commitments set out in its manifesto to the citizens of Renfrewshire to invest in inclusive economic growth, the environment, local communities and support the most vulnerable in Renfrewshire. This continues to be the case despite this budget being delivered during the most significantly challenging and disruptive period in the history of the Council. The COVID19 pandemic and public health emergency has impacted on our economy and communities in a way and at a scale we could never have imagined. This Administration is committed to supporting both our economy, communities, and most vulnerable citizens through this period of unprecedented challenge as well as the period of recovery and renewal where Renfrewshire and its citizens can begin to once again flourish. This budget sets out plans to deliver £443.5 million of capital investment when our economy needs it most. Investment that will not just create jobs and stimulate economic activity now but which is focused on generating long term inclusive economic growth to benefit all, supporting town centre regeneration to redefine and create sustainable town centres that can flourish, improving our roads and pathway infrastructure to keep Renfrewshire's economy moving, as well as continuing to grow the investment in our schools. Despite the unprecedented financial challenges that have been faced by the Council, this budget also puts in place investment to ensure support for social recovery and renewal is backed up by substantial resources, reflecting our commitment and promises to our communities and continues to invest in services to protect the most vulnerable across our communities when they need us most;

2. That as recommended by the Director, these budget proposals take a holistic view of resources available and include the use of the £2.500 million of available resources outlined in Agenda item 3 and direct them as follows: -

In recognition of the critical role quality outdoor time has played in supporting our communities during the challenging period of lockdown we will invest an additional £1.500 million to support improvement in outdoor access and play areas. These resources will augment the £0.784 million of Cycling, Walking & Safer Streets specific capital grant, providing a total £2.284 million investment in this key priority. These resources will be deployed across a range of priorities that will deliver improvements in important outdoor spaces used across our communities for exercise, recreation, and family enjoyment. A full programme will be brought back to the Infrastructure, Land and Environment Board and which will include investment in the following priorities areas:

Investment to encourage and support 'Freeplay' focused on enhancing and improving the play experience in council owned recreation areas across Renfrewshire;

A programme of work to deliver an improved outdoor environment to support increased recreational walking, activity and general enjoyment of our greenspace surroundings. This will include investment in Clyde Muirshiel Park & Gleniffer Braes and £0.150 million specifically to support a programme of tree works and path clearance across Renfrewshire's key urban conurbations;

A pilot schemes for traffic reduction studies on 'Gateway' village communities to promote safer walking within rural villages;

£0.750 million top up to the £1.600 million investment announced in 2020/21 to support a programme of improvement projects across the school and early learning estate, bringing this total investment to £2.350 million over the two years;

£0.250 million of funding to support the provision of safe road crossing facilities at appropriate points as part of improving safer walking routes to schools and nurseries with specific locations to be outlined in a future Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy board;

3. Supporting social recovery from COVID19 across Renfrewshire's communities is a major priority for this Administration. The work progressed to date and outlined in the Social Renewal Plan covered later in this agenda, reflects both the early priority this Administration has placed on addressing this key challenge and that we are committed to listening to those in our communities about what matters most to them and where they most need help. This Administration is not just committed to listening but acting and that is why today we will commit the following additional resources to support our Social Renewal Action plan;

£2 million from our flexible COVID resources in 2021/22;

The Council's confirmed £0.706 million share of the £20 million of financial insecurity resources announced by the Scottish Government on the 16th February 2021;

This further £2.706 million of funding is in addition to our own existing Tackling Poverty Programme and Alcohol & Drugs Commission resources, both of which are significantly funded programmes that will play key roles in the Social Renewal action plan and response. Additionally, it is expected that the social renewal across Renfrewshire's communities will also benefit from the deployment of £100 million of additional resources across Scotland by the Scottish Government in 2021/22 to tackle poverty and low income;

This commitment today will put in place enhanced capacity to support our Social Renewal Plan, ensuring priorities and actions, co-produced by the community for the community, is backed up by substantial funding that will help and support our communities through this most challenging of times;

Full details of the deployment of these resources will be outlined in the next Social Renewal report in June, However, today we can confirm the following priority commitments to allow actions to be commenced now: -

To assist the delivery in Renfrewshire on the Promise of the Independent Care Review, a grant totalling £0.180 million over a three year period to support the existing Who Cares Communities that Care Project for a further three years to continue their innovative community development work aimed building community resilience and support for care experienced young people. This is an early demonstration of our commitment to ensure that care experienced young people are fully supported to both successfully navigate this recovery process and continue to grow and thrive into confident young adults;

Recognising the importance of mental health and well-being of Renfrewshire's children an additional £0.250 million will be invested in children's services to enhance the £1.66 million of investment already in place through funding provided by the Scottish Government for school counselling and mental health, the contribution from Barnardo's Scotland via their strategic partnership on mental health and the funds already allocated through the Alcohol and Drug Commission. The focus of the additional funds will be on developing a trauma aware and response approach across Renfrewshire which will accelerate the delivery of support to children and young people and to their parents to build improvement in outcomes in mental health and well-being;

£0.200 million to support additional officers to provide direct support, advocacy and representation for private tenants and private landlord enforcement activities, recognising the very challenging time that will be experienced as temporary legal protections for tenants that have operated during COVID19 transition away;

£0.200 million to support the roll out of the Imagination Library Project with all of Renfrewshire's children becoming eligible on their 2nd birthday, recognising the highly valuable impact the pilot project has had with looked after children;

Providing £0.100 million of funding for Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau to provide independent welfare, employment and redundancy rights advice and advocacy, recognising the significant challenges that are likely to emerge for individuals as the furlough scheme begins to come to an end;

£0.100 million to provide an uplift for the Discretionary Housing Payment fund recognising the likely increased number of individuals requiring support with their housing costs;

£0.030 million to allow Children's Services to provide additional support for young carers including respite during the COVID period;

4. Redirect £0.150 million from the Council's own existing business grant resources already available in 2020/21 to support: -

the provision of £0.100 million for a grant scheme that will offset the on-premises licence costs covering the period such businesses have been required to close by law during COVID19 restrictions; and

£0.050 million to provide a Hot Food Retailer incentive scheme to transition away from single use plastics to bio-degradable packaging;

5. To protect services to the most vulnerable in Renfrewshire, and in line with the conditions set out in the 2021/22 financial settlement, agree to the recommendation outlined in the Director's report to make available £2.323 million of additional recurring resources to manage the net impact of new service and cost pressures within Adult Social Care Services, and continue the implementation of the Carers Act. These additional resources will be made available under delegation to the Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership (RHSCP) from 1 April 2021. In addition, as part of this delegation process, agree to continue to work in pro-active partnership with the RHSCP and social care providers to secure payment of the living wage to all care staff providing services to Renfrewshire residents in addition to those directly employed by the Council;

6. To agree the base budget assessment for all services for 2021/22 as recommended by the Director of Finance and Resources, and subject to agreement of item 5 above, agree a 2021/22 base budget of £446.193 million;

7. To agree to make provision in 2021/22 for pay inflation as detailed in section 5.1 of the Directors report and make no provision for general non-pay inflation, as recommended by the Director of Finance and Resources;

8. To agree to a general 2% inflationary increase in charges for services, subject to the note at paragraph 14 below;

9. To agree the resource allocations for 2021/22 for all services, as amended by these proposals;

10. To agree the detailed Revenue Estimates for all services be amended to reflect these proposals and the necessary allocation of central support costs, central repairs costs, capital charges, specific grants and loan charges provision with Directors authorised to take any action necessary to implement these decisions;

11. Agree to draw £1.692 million of funding in from financial flexibilities identified in the financial strategy to support revenue spending in 2021/22;

12. Subject to agreement of the above, to agree that the council tax for 2021/22 be set at £1,315.42 for Band D subjects, representing a freeze at the 2020/21 level, securing access to the conditional local government grant and for all bandings to be set at:

Band	£
B	1,023.10
C	1,169.26
D	1,315.42
E	1,728.32
F	2,137.56
G	2,576.03
H	3,222.78

13. Subject to agreement of the points above, agree that the Council's budget is underpinned by appropriate decisions and makes appropriate provision to meet the specified commitments in the package of conditions linked to the Council's grant settlement;

14. To agree to increase other charges for services by 2% (as detailed in paragraph 8 above) or where appropriate by the rate set in national legislation or guidance, or where charges are based on full cost recovery by the appropriate increase to maintain this position, subject to Directors being authorised

(a) to round the charge up or down to a figure deemed by them appropriate; and

(b) not to impose any increase, if having reviewed the implications of the increase, he or she determines it would be inappropriate to do so, having regard to any material factor applicable to the goods or services to which the charge relates;

To note the requirement of financial code 13 that Directors review the amounts their departments charge for goods or services and if they think any charge needs to be increased, they will recommend this to the appropriate Board. The Council therefore agrees that when a Director carries out such a review and believes a charge for goods or services should be levied which reflects an increase greater than the increase of 2% or the rate set in national legislation or guidance, he or she will be entitled to recommend the same to the appropriate Board for approval.”

Councillor Harte, seconded by Councillor Sharkey, moved as an amendment:

“1. That as recommended by the Director, these budget proposals take a holistic view of resources available and include the use of the £2.500 million of available resources outlined in Agenda item 3 and direct them as follows: -

Invest £1.000 million to support investment in parks and recreational green space across Renfrewshire, recognising the important and positive role such spaces have made to the healthy and active lives of our communities during lockdown and will continue to play in the recovery and renewal process;

Invest £1.000 million of capital resources in upgrade works on community centres, specifically Bargarran Community Centre, Beechwood Community Centre, Foxbar Youth Learning Centre Glenburn Community Centre and Johnstone Castle Community Centre; with specific upgrade proposals to be the subject of a future report to the Leadership Board;

Invest £0.500 million to provide further investment in the provision of additional digital devices and connectivity for our school pupils recognising the critical role digital access and connectivity now plays in educating our young people;

2. Recognising the significant impact the pandemic has had on the education and welfare of our young people and in addition to the £1.8 million expected to be received from national resources to fund a programme of support to catch-up on missed learning, commit an additional £1.150 million of flexible COVID19 grant available in 2021/22 to specifically fund the following complimentary recovery and support priorities:

£0.750 million to provide additional mental health support to our schools over the next three years and for a future report to be provided by the Director to the Education and Children’s Services Policy Board to outline in detail the plans for the delivery of this service;

£0.300 million to provide £0.100 million per annum support to increase the provision of Breakfast Clubs across Renfrewshire’s schools, in recognition of the positive impact such clubs can have to support our young people in some of the most deprived areas be ready and prepared to learn each day as our children return to in-school learning;

£0.100 million to ensure that over the next three years every primary 5 to 7 pupil in Renfrewshire schools has access to a credit union account with a £10 starter balance;

3. In recognition of the highly positive impact tackling poverty and inequality has made in Renfrewshire and recognising the increased prominence this excellent work will play to support social renewal across our communities, commit additional revenue resources of £1.520 million, funded from £0.706 million of financial insecurity

resources and £0.814 million of flexible COVID19 grant resources in 2021/22, to invest in the following key priorities: -

Invest £ 0.300 million to provide a £ 0.100 million per annum top up over three years to the Scottish Welfare Fund in recognition of the ongoing demand pressure that this fund will experience across Renfrewshire moving forward;

Invest £ 0.450 million to provide a £ 0.150 million per annum top up over three years to the Discretionary Housing Payment fund, again in recognition of the increased pressure that will be experienced from hardship applications arising from citizens impacted by COVID19 and the wider economic and social impact;

Invest £ 0.210 million to provide £ 0.070 million per annum over three years to provide home starter packs for new tenants in Renfrewshire, providing much needed support for key items for citizens setting up their new council home;

Invest £0.210 million to employ, over three years, two Health and Homelessness Coordinators, providing a much needed service to some of our most vulnerable citizens in Renfrewshire in what will be a highly challenging recovery period;

Earmark £0.350 million to provide a £0.117 million per annum boost over three years to the highly successful Street Stuff initiative to support our young people enjoy safe play and social interaction as the post vaccine relaxations on restrictions increasingly emerge;

4. To protect services to the most vulnerable in Renfrewshire, and in line with the conditions set out in the 2021/22 financial settlement, agree to the recommendation outlined in the Director's report to make available £2.323 million of additional recurring resources to manage the net impact of new service and cost pressures within Adult Social Care Services, and continue the implementation of the Carers Act. These additional resources will be made available under delegation to the Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership (RHSCP) from 1 April 2021. In addition, as part of this delegation process, agree to continue to work in pro-active partnership with the RHSCP and social care providers to secure payment of the living wage to all care staff providing services to Renfrewshire residents in addition to those directly employed by the Council;

5. To agree the base budget assessment for all services for 2021/22 as recommended by the Director of Finance and Resources, and subject to agreement of item 4 above, agree a 2021/22 base budget of £446.193 million;

6. To agree to make provision in 2021/22 for pay inflation as detailed in section 5.1 of the Directors report and make no provision for general non-pay inflation, as recommended by the Director of Finance and Resources;

7. To agree to a general 2% inflationary increase in charges for services, subject to the note at paragraph 13 below;

8. To agree the resource allocations for 2021/22 for all services, as amended by these proposals;

9. To agree the detailed Revenue Estimates for all services be amended to reflect these proposals and the necessary allocation of central support costs, central repairs costs, capital charges, specific grants and loan charges provision with Directors authorised to take any action necessary to implement these decisions;

10. Agree to draw £1.692 million of funding in from financial flexibilities identified in the financial strategy to support revenue spending in 2021/22;

11. Subject to agreement of the above, to agree that the council tax for 2021/22 be set at £1,315.42 for Band D subjects, representing a freeze at the 2020/21 level, securing access to the conditional local government grant and for all bandings to be set at:

Band	£s
B	1,023.10
C	1,169.26
D	1,315.42
E	1,728.32
F	2,137.56
G	2,576.03
H	3,222.78

12. Subject to agreement of the points above, agree that the Council's budget is underpinned by appropriate decisions and makes appropriate provision to meet the specified commitments in the package of conditions linked to the Council's grant settlement;

13. To agree to increase other charges for services by 2% (as detailed in paragraph 7 above) or where appropriate by the rate set in national legislation or guidance, or where charges are based on full cost recovery by the appropriate increase to maintain this position, subject to Directors being authorised

(a) to round the charge up or down to a figure deemed by them appropriate; and

(b) not to impose any increase, if having reviewed the implications of the increase, he or she determines it would be inappropriate to do so, having regard to any material factor applicable to the goods or services to which the charge relates;

To note the requirement of financial code 13 that Directors review the amounts their departments charge for goods or services and if they think any charge needs to be increased, they will recommend this to the appropriate Board. The Council therefore agrees that when a Director carries out such a review and believes a charge for goods or services should be levied which reflects an increase greater than the increase of 2% or the rate set in national legislation or guidance, he or she will be entitled to recommend the same to the appropriate Board for approval."

Chair

The Provost lost connectivity to the meeting and Councillor McEwan, Depute Provost, assumed the chair. The Provost rejoined the meeting and reassumed the chair.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10.21am to allow members to consider the motion and amendments. The meeting reconvened at 10.58am.

Declarations of Interest

Councillors Dowling and Montgomery having previously declared an interest left the meeting.

Councillors McIntyre and J MacLaren having previously declared an interest remained in the meeting.

On the roll being called, the following members voted for the amendment: Councillors, Begg, Bibby, Binks, Brown, Davidson, Devine, Grady, Graham, Harte, Hood, Kennedy, Kerr, Mackay, James MacLaren, McCulloch, McIntyre, Sharkey, Sheridan, and Strang .

The following members voted for the motion: Councillors Adam-McGregor, Burns, J Cameron, Provost L Cameron, Campbell, Andy Doig, Audrey Doig, Don, Hughes, Kenny MacLaren, Mags MacLaren, McCartin, McEwan, McGurk, McNaughtan, Mylet, Nicolson, Paterson, Rodden, Shaw and Steel.

19 members having voted for the amendment and 21 members having voted for the motion, the motion was accordingly declared carried.

DECIDED:

(a) That this Administration's fourth budget will continue to deliver on its commitments set out in its manifesto to the citizens of Renfrewshire to invest in inclusive economic growth, the environment, local communities and support the most vulnerable in Renfrewshire. This continues to be the case despite this budget being delivered during the most significantly challenging and disruptive period in the history of the Council. The Covid-19 pandemic and public health emergency has impacted on our economy and communities in a way and at a scale we could never have imagined. This Administration is committed to supporting both our economy, communities and most vulnerable citizens through this period of unprecedented challenge as well as the period of recovery and renewal where Renfrewshire and its citizens can begin to once again flourish. This budget sets out plans to deliver £443.5 million of capital investment when our economy needs it most. Investment that will not just create jobs and stimulate economic activity now but which is focused on generating long term inclusive economic growth to benefit all, supporting town centre regeneration to redefine and create sustainable town centres that can flourish, improving our roads and pathway infrastructure to keep Renfrewshire's economy moving, as well as continuing to grow the investment in our schools. Despite the unprecedented financial challenges that have been faced by the Council, this budget also puts in place investment to ensure support for social recovery and renewal is backed up by substantial resources, reflecting our commitment and promises to our communities and continues to invest in services to protect the most vulnerable across our communities when they need us most;

(b) That as recommended by the Director, these budget proposals take a holistic view of resources available and include the use of the £2.500 million of available resources outlined in Agenda item 3 and direct them as follows: -

In recognition of the critical role quality outdoor time has played in supporting our communities during the challenging period of lockdown we will invest an additional £1.500 million to support improvement in outdoor access and play areas. These resources will augment the £0.784 million of Cycling, Walking & Safer Streets specific capital grant, providing a total £2.284 million investment in this key priority. These resources will be deployed across a range of priorities that will deliver improvements in important outdoor spaces used across our communities for exercise, recreation and family enjoyment. A full programme will be brought back to the Infrastructure, Land and Environment Board and which will include investment in the following priorities areas:

Investment to encourage and support 'Freeplay' focused on enhancing and improving the play experience in council owned recreation areas across Renfrewshire;

A programme of work to deliver an improved outdoor environment to support increased recreational walking, activity and general enjoyment of our greenspace surroundings. This will include investment in Clyde Muirshiel Park & Gleniffer Braes and £0.150 million specifically to support a programme of tree works and path clearance across Renfrewshire's key urban conurbations;

A pilot schemes for traffic reduction studies on 'Gateway' village communities to promote safer walking within rural villages;

£0.750 million top up to the £1.600 million investment announced in 2020/21 to support a programme of improvement projects across the school and early learning estate, bringing this total investment to £2.350 million over the two years;

£0.250 million of funding to support the provision of safe road crossing facilities at appropriate points as part of improving safer walking routes to schools and nurseries with specific locations to be outlined in a future Infrastructure, Land & Environment Policy Board;

(c) Supporting social recovery from Covid-19 across Renfrewshire's communities is a major priority for this Administration. The work progressed to date and outlined in the Social Renewal Plan covered later in this agenda, reflects both the early priority this Administration has placed on addressing this key challenge and that we are committed to listening to those in our communities about what matters most to them and where they most need help. This Administration is not just committed to listening but acting and that is why today we will commit the following additional resources to support our Social Renewal Action plan;

£2 million from our flexible Covid resources in 2021/22;

The Council's confirmed £0.706 million share of the £20 million of financial insecurity resources announced by the Scottish Government on the 16th February 2021;

This further £2.706 million of funding is in addition to our own existing Tackling Poverty Programme and Alcohol & Drugs Commission resources, both of which are significantly funded programmes that will play key roles in the Social Renewal action plan and response. Additionally, it is expected that the social renewal across Renfrewshire's communities will also benefit from the deployment of £100 million of additional resources across Scotland by the Scottish Government in 2021/22 to tackle poverty and low income;

This commitment today will put in place enhanced capacity to support our Social Renewal Plan, ensuring priorities and actions, co-produced by the community for the community, is backed up by substantial funding that will help and support our communities through this most challenging of times;

Full details of the deployment of these resources will be outlined in the next Social Renewal report in June, However, today we can confirm the following priority commitments to allow actions to be commenced now: -

To assist the delivery in Renfrewshire on the Promise of the Independent Care Review, a grant totalling £0.180 million over a three year period to support the existing Who Cares Communities that Care Project for a further three years to continue their innovative community development work aimed building community resilience and support for care experienced young people. This is an early demonstration of our commitment to ensure that care experienced young people are fully supported to both successfully navigate this recovery process and continue to grow and thrive into confident young adults;

Recognising the importance of mental health and well-being of Renfrewshire's children an additional £0.250 million will be invested in children's services to enhance the £1.66 million of investment already in place through funding provided by the Scottish Government for school counselling and mental health, the contribution from Barnardo's Scotland via their strategic partnership on mental health and the funds already allocated through the Alcohol and Drug Commission. The focus of the additional funds will be on developing a trauma aware and response approach across Renfrewshire which will accelerate the delivery of support to children and young people and to their parents to build improvement in outcomes in mental health and well-being;

£0.200 million to support additional officers to provide direct support, advocacy and representation for private tenants and private landlord enforcement activities, recognising the very challenging time that will be experienced as temporary legal protections for tenants that have operated during Covid-19 transition away;

£0.200 million to support the roll out of the Imagination Library Project with all of Renfrewshire's children becoming eligible on their second birthday, recognising the highly valuable impact the pilot project has had with looked after children;

Providing £0.100 million of funding for Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau to provide independent welfare, employment and redundancy rights advice and advocacy, recognising the significant challenges that are likely to emerge for individuals as the furlough scheme begins to come to an end;

£0.100 million to provide an uplift for the Discretionary Housing Payment fund recognising the likely increased number of individuals requiring support with their housing costs;

£0.030 million to allow Children's Services to provide additional support for young carers including respite during the Covid period;

(d) Redirect £0.150 million from the Council's own existing business grant resources already available in 2020/21 to support: -

the provision of £0.100 million for a grant scheme that will offset the on-premises licence costs covering the period such businesses have been required to close by law during COVID19 restrictions; and

£0.050 million to provide a Hot Food Retailer incentive scheme to transition away from single use plastics to bio-degradable packaging;

(e) To protect services to the most vulnerable in Renfrewshire, and in line with the conditions set out in the 2021/22 financial settlement, agree to the recommendation outlined in the Director's report to make available £2.323 million of additional recurring resources to manage the net impact of new service and cost pressures within Adult Social Care Services, and continue the implementation of the Carers Act. These additional resources will be made available under delegation to the Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership (RHSCP) from 1 April 2021. In addition, as part of this delegation process, agree to continue to work in pro-active partnership with the RHSCP and social care providers to secure payment of the living wage to all care staff providing services to Renfrewshire residents in addition to those directly employed by the Council;

(f) To agree the base budget assessment for all services for 2021/22 as recommended by the Director of Finance and Resources, and agree a 2021/22 base budget of £446.193 million;

(g) To agree to make provision in 2021/22 for pay inflation as detailed in section 5.1 of the Directors report and make no provision for general non-pay inflation, as recommended by the Director of Finance and Resources;

(h) To agree to a general 2% inflationary increase in charges for services, subject to the note at paragraph (o) below;

(i) To agree the resource allocations for 2021/22 for all services, as amended by these proposals;

(j) To agree the detailed Revenue Estimates for all services be amended to reflect these proposals and the necessary allocation of central support costs, central repairs costs, capital charges, specific grants and loan charges provision with Directors authorised to take any action necessary to implement these decisions;

(k) Agree to draw £1.692 million of funding in from financial flexibilities identified in the financial strategy to support revenue spending in 2021/22;

(l) To agree that the Council Tax for 2021/22 be set at £1,315.42 for Band D subjects, representing a freeze at the 2020/21 level, securing access to the conditional local government grant and for all bandings to be set at:

Band	£s
B	1,023.10
C	1,169.26
D	1,315.42
E	1,728.32
F	2,137.56
G	2,576.03
H	3,222.78

(m) To agree that the Council's budget is underpinned by appropriate decisions and makes appropriate provision to meet the specified commitments in the package of conditions linked to the Council's grant settlement;

(n) To agree to increase other charges for services by 2% (as detailed in paragraph h above) or where appropriate by the rate set in national legislation or guidance, or where charges are based on full cost recovery by the appropriate increase to maintain this position, subject to Directors being authorised

(i) to round the charge up or down to a figure deemed by them appropriate; and

(ii) not to impose any increase, if having reviewed the implications of the increase, he or she determines it would be inappropriate to do so, having regard to any material factor applicable to the goods or services to which the charge relates; and

(o) To note the requirement of financial code 13 that Directors review the amounts their departments charge for goods or services and if they think any charge needs to be increased, they will recommend this to the appropriate Board. The Council therefore agrees that when a Director carries out such a review and believes a charge for goods or services should be levied which reflects an increase greater than the increase of 2% or the rate set in national legislation or guidance, he or she will be entitled to recommend the same to the appropriate Board for approval.

Sederunt

Councillors Dowling and Montgomery re-joined the meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11.42am and reconvened at 11.56am.

3 Non Housing Capital Investment Programme, Prudential Framework and Treasury Management Strategy, and Capital Strategy 2021/22 – 2025/26

There was submitted a report by the Director of Finance & Resources relative to the planned capital investment for non-housing services for the period 2021/22 to 2025/26 which covered a range of corporate projects across all service areas within the Council with the exception of council housing. The report advised that the resources available to support investment included prudential borrowing and capital grant as well as contributions from revenue, partners, and external funding bodies.

The report intimated that on 1 February 2021 the Scottish Government had published the draft Scottish Government budget for 2021/22 and the provisional local government finance settlement. The proposed 2021/22 capital grant for Renfrewshire Council was £12.910 million, of which £0.784 million was specific grant relating to cycling and walking safer streets. It was noted that nationally the level of general capital grant had not increased from that announced in 2020/21 however updated distribution figures had resulted in a slightly increased allocation for Renfrewshire. The level of general capital grant allocated to local government in the draft budget for 2021/22 was substantially reduced from that received in 2019/20 and 2020/21. In addition the Scottish Government had recently published medium-term financial

planning figures for future grant levels which indicatively outlined an expectation that the level of core capital grant over the medium term would remain at flat cash for the next five-years, excluding funding for flood risk management. Confirmation of this funding environment would present challenges for the Council in terms of addressing asset lifecycle maintenance costs which generally equated to or exceeded £12 million annually. As a result, the Council would require to fundamentally review the approach to regular lifecycle maintenance planning recognising the more constrained level of capital grant that was likely to be available over the medium term. There would be little scope for investment in assets other than rolling lifecycle maintenance unless the Council was able to access and secure other sources of funding. It was highlighted that forecasts by the Scottish Fiscal Commission suggested the outlook for the economy was one of marginal growth over the medium term, which could translate into reduced opportunities for capital receipts as a source of income to the capital plan; with a potential greater reliance on increased borrowing as the main source of capital funding outwith the capital grant settlement which would result in revenue pressures at a time when the revenue fund was also constrained.

Outwith the core capital grant settlement, the Scottish Government had made further funding announcements, which although not anticipated would benefit local government directly could support applications and access to these funds

It was noted that the capital plan outlined in the report, and detailed in Appendices 1-5, extended beyond 2021/22 but that no capital grant from 2022/23 had been incorporated. Approved programmes already in place which were funded by other arrangements, for example prudential borrowing or specific funding related to the City Deal had however been included. It was further noted that this approach did not preclude the Council taking further investment decisions as part of the budget process where separate funding arrangements were established.

The report intimated that the Covid-19 pandemic and associated lockdown measures had impacted the planned capital programme as outlined in the report submitted to the meeting of the Council held on 17 December 2020, with the construction closedown and subsequent social distancing being key issues which had exposed the Council to contractor claims for additional costs. Discussions had been ongoing with contractors with regards the risk of claims and while not totally mitigated the risk appeared to have reduced. In addition, the Scottish Government had announced further Covid-related funding in both 2020/21 and 2021/22 which could be accessed to cover Covid specific risks of this nature and addressed costs arising from contractor claims. Both developments combined had reduced the requirement to maintain the contingency funding previously agreed and therefore it was proposed that this funding was made available for future investment and transferred to the Strategic Asset Management Fund.

The report stated that that the Prudential and Treasury Management Codes played a key role in capital finance in local authorities and they required the Council to set prudential and treasury management indicators for the following three years to ensure that the Council's capital investment plans were affordable, prudent and sustainable. The Treasury Management Code further required that the Council approve, annually in advance, a strategy for its treasury management activities, whilst the Prudential Code also required full Council approval of the Capital Strategy which set out the long term context within which capital investment decisions were made to improve capital, revenue and balance sheet planning. Details of the proposed prudential indicators and treasury management strategy and proposed capital strategy were attached as Appendices 6 and 7 of the report respectively.

Councillor Shaw, seconded by Councillor Nicolson moved:

“1. To agree the investment programme totalling £443.499 million covering the period up to 2025/26, including the recommendations contained in the report for the allocation of resources to support the delivery of lifecycle maintenance programmes over the period;

2. To endorse the decisions taken by Council in consideration of item 2, to

Invest an additional £1.500 million to support improvement in outdoor access and play areas, augmenting the £0.784 million of Cycling, Walking & Safer Streets specific capital grant, providing a total £2.284 million investment in this key priority. These resources will be deployed across a range of priorities that will deliver improvements in important outdoor spaces used across our communities for exercise, recreation and family enjoyment. A full programme will be brought back to the Infrastructure, Land and Environment Board and which will include investment in the following priorities areas:

Investment to encourage and support ‘Freeplay’ focused on enhancing and improving the play experience in council owned recreation areas across Renfrewshire;

A programme of work to deliver an improved outdoor environment to support increased recreational walking, activity and general enjoyment of our greenspace surroundings. This will include investment in Clyde Muirshiel Park & Gleniffer Braes and £0.150 million specifically to support a programme of tree works and path clearance across Renfrewshire’s key urban conurbations;

A pilot schemes for traffic reduction studies on ‘Gateway’ village communities to promote safer walking within rural villages;

Invest £0.750 million to top up the £1.600 million investment announced in 2020/21 to support a programme of improvement projects across the school and early learning estate, bringing this total investment to £2.350 million over the two years;

Invest £0.250 million of funding to support the provision of safe road crossing facilities at appropriate points as part of improving safer walking routes to schools and nurseries, with specific locations to be outlined in a future Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board;

3. To delegate to the Head of Property Services, Head of Operations and Infrastructure and Head of Schools, in consultation with the Director of Finance and Resources, authority to adjust where appropriate resources across individual components of the lifecycle maintenance, roads and structures, and schools investment programmes respectively;

4. Agree to the suite of prudential indicators, treasury management indicators, treasury and capital strategy as set out in Appendices 6 and 7 of the report, subject to required adjustments arising from decisions outlined in points 1 – 3 above and in relation to any other decisions taken by members at this Council meeting.”

This was agreed.

DECIDED:

(a) To agree the investment programme totalling £443.499 million covering the period up to 2025/26, including the recommendations contained in the report for the allocation of resources to support the delivery of lifecycle maintenance programmes over the period;

(b) To endorse the decisions taken by Council in consideration of item 2 of this Minute, to

Invest an additional £1.500 million to support improvement in outdoor access and play areas, augmenting the £0.784 million of Cycling, Walking & Safer Streets specific capital grant, providing a total £2.284 million investment in this key priority. These resources will be deployed across a range of priorities that will deliver improvements in important outdoor spaces used across our communities for exercise, recreation and family enjoyment. A full programme will be brought back to the Infrastructure, Land & Environment Board and which will include investment in the following priorities areas:

Investment to encourage and support 'Freeplay' focused on enhancing and improving the play experience in council owned recreation areas across Renfrewshire;

A programme of work to deliver an improved outdoor environment to support increased recreational walking, activity and general enjoyment of our greenspace surroundings. This will include investment in Clyde Muirshiel Park & Gleniffer Braes and £0.150 million specifically to support a programme of tree works and path clearance across Renfrewshire's key urban conurbations;

A pilot schemes for traffic reduction studies on 'Gateway' village communities to promote safer walking within rural villages;

Invest £0.750 million to top up the £1.600 million investment announced in 2020/21 to support a programme of improvement projects across the school and early learning estate, bringing this total investment to £2.350 million over the two years;

Invest £0.250 million of funding to support the provision of safe road crossing facilities at appropriate points as part of improving safer walking routes to schools and nurseries, with specific locations to be outlined in a future Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board;

(c) To delegate to the Head of Property Services, Head of Operations & Infrastructure and Head of Schools, in consultation with the Director of Finance & Resources, authority to adjust where appropriate resources across individual components of the lifecycle maintenance, roads and structures, and schools investment programmes respectively; and

(d) Agree to the suite of prudential indicators, treasury management indicators, treasury and capital strategy as set out in Appendices 6 and 7 of the report, subject to required adjustments arising from decisions outlined in points 1 – 3 above and in relation to any other decisions taken by members at this Council meeting.

4 **Housing Revenue Account Budget & Rent Levels 2021/22 and Housing Capital Investment Plan 2021/22 to 2023/24**

There was submitted a joint report by the Directors of Communities & Housing and Finance & Resources relative to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget for financial year 2021/22 and the Housing Capital Investment Plan 2021/22 to 2023/24. Appendices to the report detailed budget changes for 2021/22; anticipated expenditure and income for the year ending 31 March 2021; and the Housing Capital Investment Plan 2021/22 to 2022/23.

The report provided an update on consultation with tenants on the annual rent setting process and outlined ongoing risks and challenges facing the HRA.

Councillor McGurk, seconded by Councillor McNaughtan, moved;

(a) That an average weekly increase of 1.5% for 2021/22 for housing rents, lock-up rents and launderette charges be approved;

(b) That the findings of the recent tenant consultation exercise be noted;

(c) That the Housing Revenue Account Budget for financial year 2021/22, as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report, be approved;

(d) That the Housing Capital Investment Plan 2021/22 to 2023/24, as detailed in Appendix 3 to the report, be approved; and

(e) That the continuing requirement to achieve best value in the commissioning of works by having an optimum workflow over the three years of the investment plan be noted and that the Director of Communities & Housing liaise with the Director of Finance & Resources to re-profile the capital programme and available resources, as necessary, in line with the appropriate limits established under the Council's capital prudential framework arrangements.

This was agreed.

DECIDED:

(a) That an average weekly increase of 1.5% for 2021/22 for housing rents, lock-up rents and launderette charges be approved;

(b) That the findings of the recent tenant consultation exercise be noted;

(c) That the Housing Revenue Account Budget for financial year 2021/22, as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report, be approved;

(d) That the Housing Capital Investment Plan 2021/22 to 2023/24, as detailed in Appendix 3 to the report, be approved; and

(e) That the continuing requirement to achieve best value in the commissioning of works by having an optimum workflow over the three years of the investment plan be noted and that the Director of Communities & Housing liaise with the Director of Finance & Resources to re-profile the capital programme and available resources, as

necessary, in line with the appropriate limits established under the Council's capital prudential framework arrangements.

5 **Social Renewal Plan**

Under reference to Item 3(c) of the Minute of the meeting of the Council held on 17 December 2020 there was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to the development of a Social Renewal Plan for Renfrewshire.

The report made reference to the decision taken at the meeting of the Council held on 24 September 2020, that a community impact assessment should be undertaken to develop an understanding of the impact of the pandemic on local people, and that this would inform the development of a Social Renewal Plan for Renfrewshire setting out how the Council would work with partners to tackle both the impact of Covid-19 and existing inequalities across Renfrewshire's communities. It was acknowledged that the impact on communities would have to be assessed over an extended period, as changes to for example employment, income, relationships and mental health and wellbeing might develop over time. Restrictions continued to impact local people, businesses and communities and there was an ongoing need for the Council to work with partners to identify and respond to any emerging issues as these arose. The report built on the report submitted to the meeting of the Council held on 17 December 2020, which had highlighted the initial findings from the community impact assessment. A summary of the work that had taken place to complete the first phase of the community impact assessment, including a COVID-19 impact survey which had been issued to 1500 local people, engagement with the Local Partnerships and targeted engagement with a range of different equality groups, was provided.

The report also stated that the information gathered to date had now been analysed and the key findings and areas of concern identified were outlined. These findings had been used to develop an initial Social Renewal Plan appended to the report, which detailed a range of proposed priority actions for the Council and its partners to progress. The Plan, focussed on improving wellbeing and tackling inequalities that existed across Renfrewshire's communities. This was the first step in the process of social renewal, with more detailed work scheduled to commence with community planning partners during late March 2021.

It was proposed that, if available, members be provided with information on which behaviours spread Covid. This was agreed.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the progress that had been achieved in terms of assessing the impact of COVID-19 on local people and communities to date be noted;
- (b) That the emerging issues being experienced locally, as identified through the community impact process, be noted;
- (c) That the initial Social Renewal Action plan in response to these key issues, a copy of which was appended to the report, be agreed;

(d) That it be agreed that regular updates on the Social Renewal Plan be submitted to meetings of the Council's Leadership Board; and

(e) That, if available, members be provided with information on which behaviours spread Covid-19.

6 Governance Arrangements

Under reference to item 6 of the Minute of the meeting of the Council held on 17 December 2020, there was submitted a report by the Director of Finance & Resources seeking approval for arrangements for the next cycle of meetings up to and including the next full Council meeting on 13 May 2021 and providing an update on the acquisition of a Public-i system that would enable live-streamed hybrid meetings to take place, once restrictions to combat the Covid-19 pandemic had been eased.

The report proposed the continuation of arrangements that had been in operation for Council and Board meeting since August 2020 with the aim of allowing the next cycle of Board meetings to take place as efficiently as possible in the current circumstances as well as enabling the Council to continue to respond to any urgent issues arising from the continuing Covid-19 pandemic. The report also proposed that the revised remit and extended membership of the Emergencies Board, agreed at the meeting of the Council held on 25 June 2020, continue. The arrangements for future Council and Board meetings would continue to be reviewed and be the subject of a further report to Council on 13 May 2021. It was noted that the date of the next meeting of the Council as detailed in the schedule required to be amended to 13 May 2021.

In addition, the report sought a delegation in relation to decisions regarding the lending or borrowing of museum collection items and sought approval or noting of various other governance related matters. Changes to the membership of various Boards were detailed and it was proposed that the meeting of the Audit, Risk & Scrutiny Board due to be held on 28 September 2021 be rescheduled to 25 October 2021.

Furthermore the report advised of the outcome of Councillor Mack's appeal against the decisions of the Standards Commission and that as a result, Councillor Mack could resume his role as an elected member of Renfrewshire Council and indicated that a further hearing by the Standards Commission was due to take place on 9 March 2021.

DECIDED:

(a) That the arrangements for the next cycle of Council and Board meetings, as set out in section 4 of the report, be approved;

(b) That the delay in the installation of the Public-i system be noted;

(c) That it be noted that the arrangements for subsequent Board cycles would be the subject of a report to be submitted to the meeting of the Council to be held on 13 May 2021;

(d) That the temporary changes to the membership and remit of the Emergencies Board approved at the meeting of the Council held on 25 June 2020 be continued;

(e) That a delegation to the Head of Policy & Commissioning, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to authorise lending of any item from the Council's museum collection and the borrowing of items from another party for exhibition by the Council and to agree the terms under which the lending or borrowing of items took place be approved;

(f) That the Leadership Board be authorised to decide requests for the return of items from the museum collection to the place or community of origin of those items;

(g) That it be agreed to appoint (i) Councillors Devine and Sheridan to replace Councillors McCulloch and Montgomery on the Communities, Housing & Planning Policy Board; (ii) Councillor Sharkey to replace Councillor Montgomery on the Cross-Party Sounding Board; (iii) Councillors Harte and Hood to replace Councillors Bibby and Davidson on the Education & Children's Services Policy Board; and (iv) Councillor Sharkey to replace Councillor Davidson on the Infrastructure, Land & Environment Policy Board;

(h) That the outcome of Councillor Mack's appeal against the decisions of the Standards Commission be noted, that as a result, Councillor Mack could resume his role as an elected member of Renfrewshire Council and that it be noted that a further hearing by the Standards Commission was due to take place on 9 March 2021; and

(i) That it be agreed that the meeting of the Audit, Risk & Scrutiny Board due to be held on 28 September 2021 be rescheduled to 25 October 2021.

8 Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Equality

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to progress with equalities and providing a draft set of equality outcomes together with information on activities delivered during the 2019/20 reporting period. It was noted that the report was intended to meet the Council's duties to report progress publicly and in an accessible manner.

The report highlighted that Renfrewshire Council had a general equality duty, which required it to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations as set out in section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010 and which also laid out a number of specific duties for public authorities to support the general equality duty. In line with these specific duties, Renfrewshire Council was required to report, by the end of April 2021, on progress with mainstreaming equality, its progress against its equality outcomes, employee information and gender pay gap information and these were detailed in the report along with more detailed information on education. The report further proposed a number of draft Equalities Outcomes areas for the period 2021/25, details of which were provided.

The report highlighted Renfrewshire's programme of events for Black History Month 2020; the Parental Employment Support Fund (PESF) Project; the Celebrating Renfrewshire Fund - by young people, for young people; the availability of sanitary products throughout Renfrewshire both in community settings and in organisations working with families with low incomes; the education-based Language Bank; the collaboration between pupils from six schools in Renfrewshire with "I Am Me" to develop an application that promoted mental wellbeing; the outdoor access strategy; Support for disabled employees via the roll out of mental health first aid training to

several service areas across the Council; and the development of a new Council website, with accessibility as the key focus.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the Progressing Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Equality Report be approved for final publication on the Council's website;
- (b) That the progress made in mainstreaming equalities and pursuing Renfrewshire Council's Equality Outcomes be noted; and
- (c) That the proposed draft Equality Outcome areas for 2021/25 be approved.

7 Independent Review of Adult Social Care

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to the Independent Review of Adult Social Care in Scotland.

The report advised that in September 2020 the Scottish Government had announced that it intended to commission an independent review of adult social care in Scotland. This review had been identified as a key element of the 2020 Programme for Government and had been expedited in order that the key findings could be published in early 2021. The report outlined the principal aim of the review, stated that following a process of engagement and consultation, the final report of the review had been published and provided an overview of its findings. The report noted that the review highlighted the need to recognise and value the critical role that social care played within society. The review identified social care support as being an investment in citizens and the economy, that there required to be a greater shift to a model of care which was more consistent and fair, which enabled and promoted the rights and capabilities of individuals and that there was an inherent right to services rather than assessment for services in line with eligibility criteria. In addition, a strong, skilled, and valued workforce was recognised as being key to achieving these ambitions, with a system funded to deliver the improvements required. The report summarised the proposed changes and recommendations to the provision of adult social care as detailed in the review. The report highlighted that there were significant implications for the provision of adult social care across Scotland and for the future role of local authorities arising from the review recommendations and the fundamental changes proposed to achieve the future vision for adult social care.

The report noted that the recommendations outlined within the review report would be debated in the Scottish Parliament. The report anticipated that these recommendations would require significant further engagement with local authorities, Integration Joint Boards, NHS Boards, social care providers and representative organisations and those who used adult social care services across Scotland. Changes to existing legislation would also require to be enacted prior to any changes being implemented. In addition, the report highlighted that although the review was intended to focus on adult social care there were several recommendations within its report which related to the provision of social work services and that further clarity was required in relation to progression of these recommendations.

Councillor Nicolson, seconded by Councillor Cameron, moved;

(a) That the content of the independent review report and its recommendations as these related to Renfrewshire be noted;

(b) That it be noted that further updates would be provided to elected members as further information became available on the Scottish Government's response to this independent review and its recommendations; and

(c) That, in addition, Council notes the cross-party CoSLA position statement "Any National Care Service must be locally empowered, reflect the needs of our communities and recognise the vital role of the third sector. It must be outcome focussed with the principle of addressing health inequalities at its core, ensure that social care is on an even playing field and address the financial challenges facing the sector. This can only be achieved by Local Government that is rooted in the community and employs local people."

Councillor McCartin, seconded by Councillor Andy Doig, moved as an amendment that in addition Renfrewshire Council write to the Scottish Government advising them of our objection to removing responsibility for social care from local councils.

In terms of Standing Order 27, Councillors Nicolson and J Cameron, being the mover and seconder of the motion agreed to accept the amendment as an addition to the motion and the motion, as amended, was approved unanimously.

DECIDED:

(a) That the content of the independent review report and its recommendations as these related to Renfrewshire be noted;

(b) That it be noted that further updates would be provided to elected members as further information became available on the Scottish Government's response to this independent review and its recommendations;

(c) That, in addition, Council notes the cross-party CoSLA position statement "Any National Care Service must be locally empowered, reflect the needs of communities and recognise the vital role of the third sector. It must be outcome focussed with the principle of addressing health inequalities at its core, ensure that social care was on an even playing field and address the financial challenges facing the sector. This could only be achieved by Local Government that was rooted in the community and employed local people"; and

(d) That Renfrewshire Council write to the Scottish Government advising of the Council's objection to removing responsibility for social care from local councils.

9 Notice of Motion 1 by Councillors Burns and Paterson

There was submitted a Notice of Motion by Councillors Burns and Paterson in the following terms:

"Council condemns the use of 'fire and rehire' tactics by employers and calls on

companies currently engaged in this process to immediately cease and engage with their workforce and trade unions to agree a fair and constructive way forward.”

Councillor Burns, seconded by Councillor Paterson, then moved the motion.

Councillor Sheridan, seconded by Councillor Sharkey, moved as a first amendment that in addition: “That this council seeks to discourage said practice by ensuring suppliers tendering for council contracts commit to fair competition that does not exploit peoples job insecurity”.

Councillor Andy Doig, seconded by Councillor McCartin, moved as a second amendment that: “Council notes both the economic and social value of the dignity of labour and believes that a policy of employee participation at board level and a system of employee shares based on the German model would improve economic performance and promote social cohesion. Council accordingly calls for the repatriation of all employment law from Westminster to Holyrood to facilitate the roll out of this policy across Scotland.”

In terms of Standing Order 27, Councillors Burns and Paterson, being the mover and seconder of the motion agreed to accept the second amendment as an addition to the motion and the motion, as amended, became the substantive motion.

On the roll being called, the following members voted for the amendment: Councillors, Begg, Bibby, Binks, Brown, Davidson, Devine, Dowling, Grady, Graham, Harte, Hood, Kennedy, Kerr, Mackay, Mack, J MacLaren, McCulloch, McIntyre, Montgomery, Sharkey, Sheridan, and Strang .

The following members voted for the motion: Councillors Adam-McGregor, Burns, Campbell, J Cameron, Provost L Cameron, Andy Doig, Audrey Doig, Don, Hughes, K MacLaren, M MacLaren, McCartin, McEwan, McGurk, McNaughtan, Mylet, Nicolson, Paterson, Rodden, Shaw, and Steel.

22 members having voted for the amendment and 21 members having voted for the motion, the amendment was accordingly declared carried.

DECIDED:

(a) That Council condemns the use of ‘fire and rehire’ tactics by employers and calls on companies currently engaged in this process to immediately cease and engage with their workforce and trade unions to agree a fair and constructive way forward; and

(b) That this Council seek to discourage said practice by ensuring suppliers tendering for Council contracts committed to fair competition that did not exploit people’s job insecurity.

10 Notice of Motion 2 by Councillors Hood and Harte

There was submitted a Notice of Motion by Councillors Hood and Harte which Provost L Cameron ruled was not competent in terms of Standing Order 19(c).

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1.39 pm and reconvened at 2.10 pm.

Sederunt

Councillor Dowling was not present when the meeting reconvened.

11 Notice of Motion 3 by Councillors McCartin and Andy Doig

There was submitted a Notice of Motion by Councillors McCartin and Andy Doig in the following terms:

"Unpaid Carers

Council aims to provide a minimum of 1 day per week break to support unpaid carers in their relentless task of caring for their loved ones, at least until the Covid pandemic is over.

"64% of carers have said they haven't been able to take any break during the pandemic; 74% are left feeling exhausted and worn out; and 44% say they have reached breaking point. [reference - Carers UK report "Caring behind closed doors, 6 months on]".

Council will contact the Scottish government to ensure that money provided through the Barnett formula for Covid related funding is provided for this type of support, and that we can start to meet the needs of these very important but vulnerable residents."

Councillor McCartin, seconded by Councillor Andy Doig, then moved the motion.

Councillor Nicolson, seconded by Councillor Paterson, moved as an amendment that the first paragraph of the motion be replaced with "Council recognises the impact that Covid has had on the lives of unpaid carers during the pandemic and recognises that the lived experience of every carer is unique to them and their needs for support require to be individually assessed. Council agrees that any additional Covid specific resources available for carers during the pandemic will be fully deployed in supporting Carers and in line with the relevant legislation"

In terms of Standing Order 27, Councillors McCartin and Andy Doig, being the mover and seconder of the motion agreed to accept the amendment which was approved unanimously.

DECIDED:

(a) That Council recognised the impact that Covid has had on the lives of unpaid carers during the pandemic and recognised that the lived experience of every carer was unique to them and that their needs for support required to be individually assessed;

(b) That Council agreed that any additional Covid specific resources available for carers during the pandemic be fully deployed in supporting Carers and in line with the relevant legislation;

(c) That it be noted that “64% of carers have said that they haven’t been able to take any break during the pandemic; 74% are left feeling exhausted and worn out; and 44% say they have reached breaking point. [reference - Carers UK report “Caring behind closed doors, 6 months on]”; and

(d) That the Council contact the Scottish Government to ensure that money provided through the Barnett formula for Covid related funding was provided for this type of support, and that the needs of these very important but vulnerable residents could be met.

Sederunt

Councillor Dowling re-joined the meeting during consideration of the following item.

Declaration of Interest

Councillor Campbell having previously declared an interest remained in the meeting.

12 Notice of Motion 4 by Councillors Kenny MacLaren and Burns

There was submitted a Notice of Motion by Councillors K MacLaren and Burns in the following terms:

"Covid Vaccinations

Council congratulates everyone involved in the ongoing campaign to deliver vaccinations against the Covid19 pandemic. This includes health board, Renfrewshire Leisure and council staff as well as those involved from the various medical practices across Renfrewshire. Council encourages everyone who is eligible to come forward and receive their vaccination when offered. Council also condemns those who have been spreading misinformation against the vaccination programme and calls for swift action to counter such misinformation, whether that be the removal of graffiti or other practices."

Councillor K MacLaren, seconded by Councillor Burns, then moved the motion which was approved unanimously.

DECIDED:

(a) That Council congratulates everyone involved in the ongoing campaign to deliver vaccinations against the Covid-19 pandemic. This included Health Board, Renfrewshire Leisure and Council staff as well as those involved from the various medical practices across Renfrewshire;

(b) That Council encourages everyone who is eligible to come forward and receive their vaccination when offered; and

(c) That Council also condemns those who have been spreading misinformation against the vaccination programme and calls for swift action to counter such misinformation, whether that be the removal of graffiti or other practices.

13 **Notice of Motion 5 by Councillors Audrey Doig and Jacqueline Cameron**

There was submitted a Notice of Motion by Councillors Audrey Doig and J Cameron in the following terms:

"Accessible Toilets for People with Crohn's Disease and Colitis

This Council notes that:

The charity Crohn's and Colitis UK is encouraging venues providing accessible toilets to install new signage. This is to help stop stigma and discrimination towards people with Crohn's Disease and Ulcerative Colitis and other invisible conditions.

There have been instances nationally where such individuals using an accessible toilet have been accused by staff members of being ineligible to use them.

The charity signs have two standing figures and a wheelchair user with the words Accessible Toilet and the logo 'Not every disability is visible'.

Council further notes that the Scottish Government consultation last year recommended that large accessible toilets for severely disabled people - known as Changing Places - are built in large new non-domestic buildings.

Council therefore resolves to:

Ensure that accessible toilets on Council premises bear these signs.

Ask town and district centre retailers and leisure outlets to do likewise with their accessible toilets.

Seek advice from the charity Crohn's & Colitis UK on the information and training we should provide to council staff members. This is so they understand these conditions and to prevent potential embarrassment for those who suffer with them.

Ensure that any Changing Places toilets in our buildings are properly signposted for visitors."

Councillor Audrey Doig, seconded by Councillor J Cameron, then moved the motion which was approved unanimously.

It was proposed that members be provided with an update in relation to a previous Council decision on accessible toilets. This was agreed.

DECIDED:

(a) That Council notes that (i) the charity Crohn's and Colitis UK was encouraging venues providing accessible toilets to install new signage. This was to help stop stigma and discrimination towards people with Crohn's Disease and Ulcerative Colitis and other invisible conditions; (ii) there had been instances nationally where such individuals using an accessible toilet had been accused by staff members of being ineligible to use them; and (iii) that the charity signs had two standing figures and a wheelchair user with the words Accessible Toilet and the logo 'Not every disability is visible';

(b) That Council further notes that the Scottish Government consultation last year recommended that large accessible toilets for severely disabled people - known as Changing Places - were built in large new non-domestic buildings;

(c) That Council resolves to (i) ensure that accessible toilets on Council premises bore these signs; (ii) ask town and district centre retailers and leisure outlets to do likewise with their accessible toilets; (iii) seek advice from the charity Crohn's and Colitis UK on the information and training to be provided to council staff members, so that they understood these conditions and prevent potential embarrassment for those who suffer with them; and (iv) ensure that any Changing Places toilets in Council buildings were properly signposted for visitors; and

(d) That members be provided with an update in relation to a previous Council decision on accessible toilets.

14 Notice of Motion 6 by Councillors McCartin and Andy Doig

In terms of Standing Order 27, the motion was withdrawn by the mover and seconder.

15 Notice of Motion 7 by Councillors James MacLaren and Graham

There was submitted a Notice of Motion by Councillors J MacLaren and Graham in the following terms:

"Council recognises the need to keep things local during this pandemic and calls for a re-think of our suppliers. Council will write to the Scottish Government to request a change to the Scottish Regulations on Public Procurement rules to allow more weighting to contractors who tender for work if they are locally based. Council believes that this would help embed green recovery principles in Renfrewshire by boosting local procurement and efforts to retain wealth creation in the community for local residents."

Councillor J MacLaren, seconded by Councillor Graham, then moved the motion which was approved unanimously.

DECIDED:

(a) That Council recognises the need to keep things local during this pandemic and called for a re-think of our suppliers;

(b) That Council writes to the Scottish Government to request a change to the Scottish Regulations on Public Procurement rules to allow more weighting to contractors who tendered for work if they were locally based; and

(c) That Council believes that this would help embed green recovery principles in Renfrewshire by boosting local procurement and efforts to retain wealth creation in the community for local residents.

16 **Notice of Motion 8 by Councillors James MacLaren and McIntyre**

There was submitted a Notice of Motion by Councillors J MacLaren and McIntyre in the following terms:

"This Council agrees to write to the Scottish Government's Finance Secretary calling on her to extend business rates relief for all retail, hospitality, leisure, and aviation related businesses for all the forthcoming financial year. Believes that the current three month extension doesn't go far enough to support businesses who have had to shut their doors, calls on the Scottish Government to focus on doing everything they can to protect jobs and livelihoods across Renfrewshire and give them the breathing space of a 12 month rates relief extension."

Councillor J MacLaren, seconded by Councillor McIntyre, then moved the motion.

Councillor Andy Doig, seconded by Councillor McCartin, moved as a first amendment that the motion be amended by the addition of "and social enterprises" after "businesses" in line three and "for" in the same line.

Councillor Sharkey, seconded by Councillor Devine, moved as a second amendment that in addition "This Council believes that the inadequate Scottish Government response to the Covid 19 emergency has proved the necessity of robust social intervention in the Scottish economy. Council agrees to write to the Scottish Government's Finance Secretary to extend and encourage that support to the economy and ask for a revised local government settlement which both addresses the unfairness of Renfrewshire's allocation and replaces the current revenue arrangements."

In terms of Standing Order 27, Councillors J MacLaren and McIntyre, being the mover and seconder of the motion agreed to accept both amendments as additions to the motion and the motion, as amended, became the substantive motion.

Councillor Nicolson, seconded by Councillor Campbell, then moved as an amendment that; "This Council agrees to write to the Scottish Government's Finance Secretary calling on her to extend business rates relief for all retail, hospitality, leisure, and aviation related businesses and social enterprises for all the forthcoming financial year. Believes that the current three month extension doesn't go far enough to support businesses who have had to shut their doors, calls on the Scottish Government to focus on doing everything they can to protect jobs and livelihoods across Renfrewshire and give them the breathing space of a 12 month rates relief extension."

On the roll being called, the following members voted for the amendment: Councillors Adam-McGregor, Burns, J Cameron, Provost L Cameron, Campbell, Audrey Doig, Don, Hughes, K MacLaren, M MacLaren, McCartin, McEwan, McGurk, McNaughtan, Mylet, Nicolson, Paterson, Rodden, Shaw and Steel.

The following members voted for the motion: Councillors, Begg, Bibby, Binks, Brown, Davidson, Devine, Andy Doig, Dowling, Grady, Graham, Harte, Hood, Kennedy, Kerr, Mackay, J MacLaren, McCulloch, McIntyre, Montgomery, Sharkey, Sheridan, and Strang.

20 members having voted for the amendment and 22 members having voted for the motion, the motion was accordingly declared carried.

DECIDED:

(a) That this Council write to the Scottish Government's Finance Secretary calling on her to extend business rates relief for all retail, hospitality, leisure, and aviation related businesses and social enterprises for all the forthcoming financial year. Believes that the current three month extension doesn't go far enough to support businesses who have had to shut their doors, calls on the Scottish Government to focus on doing everything they can to protect jobs and livelihoods across Renfrewshire and give them the breathing space of a 12 month rates relief extension; and

(b) That the Council believes that the inadequate Scottish Government response to the Covid 19 emergency had proven the necessity of robust social intervention in the Scottish economy. Council write to the Scottish Government's Finance Secretary to extend and encourage that support to the economy and ask for a revised local government settlement which both addressed the unfairness of Renfrewshire's allocation and replaced the current revenue arrangements.

17 Notice of Motion 9 by Councillors Don and Kenny MacLaren

There was submitted a Notice of Motion by Councillors Don and K MacLaren in the following terms:

"Universal Credit Uplift

Council calls on the UK Government to make permanent the £20 per week uplift to Universal Credit and to extend this to include legacy benefits. This increase in Universal Credit was introduced at the start of the pandemic to reflect the additional pressures on those on benefits. However, nothing has changed since the start of the pandemic, we are still in the midst of a health and economic crisis and withdrawing this uplift would have a serious impact on those on benefits. Council will write to the Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer to state the case to make this uplift permanent and to extend it to legacy benefits."

Councillor Don, seconded by Councillor K MacLaren, then moved the motion which was approved unanimously.

DECIDED:

(a) That Council calls on the UK Government to make permanent the £20 per week uplift to Universal Credit and to extend this to include legacy benefits;

(b) That this increase in Universal Credit had been introduced at the start of the pandemic to reflect the additional pressures on those on benefits, however, nothing had changed since the start of the pandemic, we were still in the midst of a health and economic crisis and withdrawing this uplift would have a serious impact on those on benefits; and

(c) That Council write to the Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer to state the case to make this uplift permanent and to extend it to legacy benefits.

18 Notice of Motion 10 by Councillors Grady and Kennedy

There was submitted a Notice of Motion by Councillors Grady and Kennedy in the following terms:

"Curriculum for Excellence – OECD Interim Report

Renfrewshire Council urges the Scottish Government to release the OECD unedited interim report of their review into Curriculum for Excellence. This crucial information must be in the public domain prior to this year's Holyrood elections."

Councillor Grady, seconded by Councillor Kennedy, then moved the motion which was approved unanimously.

DECIDED:

(a) That Renfrewshire Council urge the Scottish Government to release the OECD unedited interim report of their review into Curriculum for Excellence; and

(b) That it be agreed that this crucial information must be in the public domain prior to this year's Holyrood elections.

19 Notice of Motion 11 by Councillors McCartin and Andy Doig

In terms of Standing Order 27, the motion was withdrawn by the mover and seconder.

20 Notice of Motion 12 by Councillors Don and McNaughtan

There was submitted a Notice of Motion by Councillors Don and McNaughtan in the following terms:

"The Edinburgh Biodiversity Declaration

Council notes the Edinburgh Declaration on biodiversity and notes the issues raised regarding the importance of addressing the loss of biodiversity. Council notes with concern the significant implications that the loss of biodiversity and climate change has on our livelihood and communities and agrees with the need for a global framework in efforts to deliver biodiversity locally.

Council agrees to sign the Edinburgh Declaration on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. Council believes this will help the development of effective policy and governance of biodiversity making Renfrewshire a place where nature is protected and enhanced."

Councillor Don, seconded by Councillor McNaughtan, then moved the motion which was approved unanimously.

DECIDED:

- (a) That Council notes the Edinburgh Declaration on biodiversity and notes the issues raised regarding the importance of addressing the loss of biodiversity.
- (b) That Council notes with concern the significant implications that the loss of biodiversity and climate change has on our livelihood and communities and agrees with the need for a global framework in efforts to deliver biodiversity locally;
- (c) That Council agrees to sign the Edinburgh Declaration on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework; and
- (d) That Council believes that this would help the development of effective policy and governance of biodiversity making Renfrewshire a place where nature was protected and enhanced.