

**Motherwell, 26 September 2019 at 2 pm.**

A Meeting of the **POLICY AND STRATEGY COMMITTEE**

**PRESENT**

Councillor Logue, Convener; Councillor Kelly, Vice-Convener; Councillor Roarty, Vice-Convener; Councillors Barclay, Burgess, Burrows, Castles, Di Mascio, Duffy, Fotheringham, Gallacher, Graham, Hume, T. Johnston, Linden, McNally, McPake, H. McVey, Morgan and Watson.

**ALSO PRESENT**

In accordance with Standing Order 64(A), Councillor Kerr attended as a substitute for Councillor Alan Valentine.

**CHAIR**

Councillor Logue (Convener) presided.

**IN ATTENDANCE**

The Chief Executive; Executive Director (Education and Families); Chief Accountable Officer; Head of Legal and Democratic Solutions; Head of Financial Solutions; Head of Business Solutions; Head of Asset and Procurement Solutions; Head of Communities; Head of Children, Families and Justice Social Work Services; Head of People and Organisational Development; Head of Strategic Communication; Audit and Risk Manager; Commercial Contract Manager; Democratic Services Manager, and Senior Manager, NHS Lanarkshire.

**APOLOGIES**

Councillors D. Ashraf, Goldie, Magowan and Alan Valentine.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN TERMS OF THE ETHICAL STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE ETC. (SCOTLAND) ACT 2000**

1. The Committee noted that there were no declarations of interest.

**MINUTES**

**(1) APPOINTMENTS SUB-COMMITTEE**

2. There was submitted a Minute of the meeting of the Appointments Sub-Committee held on 10 June 2019.

**Decided:** that the Minute be approved.

**(2) AUDIT AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

3. There was submitted the Minutes of the Meetings of the Audit and Scrutiny Panel held on 27 June and 5 September 2019.

**Decided:** that the Minutes be approved.

**The Convener exercised his discretion to vary the Order of Business as hereinafter minuted.**

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**FIVE YEAR MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2020/21 TO 2024/25**

4. There was submitted a report by the Head of Financial Solutions (1) presenting the Five Year Medium Term Financial Plan for the Council for 2020/21 to 2024/25; (2) advising that the purpose of the Five Year Plan was to set out the challenges facing the Council in maintaining medium term financial stability, whilst achieving the strategic priorities and objectives of The Plan for North Lanarkshire; (3) intimating that, taking 2020/21 as the new baseline, the Financial Plan updated financial planning assumptions in relation to future revenue grant and other funding, along with increasing cost pressures arising from employee costs, inflation and policy decisions; (4) setting out, in Appendices 1 to 3 to the report, a range of risk based outcomes, highlighting optimistic, envisaged and pessimistic scenarios; (5) indicating that, while the envisaged scenario remained the most appropriate for planning purposes, the other scenarios illustrated the volatility which might be experienced and the extent of the fluctuation in the potential budget gap faced by the Council over the period of the Financial Plan; (6) summarising, in Table 1 of the report, the Council's projected financial outlook position; (7) informing (a) that the envisaged scenario indicated a budget gap of £113.513m over the five year planning period, and (b) that, for the three year budget period from 2020/21 to 2022/23, a £84.224m budget gap was anticipated, which assumed a 3% increase in Council Tax, and (8) stating that, in line with the principles of the revenue resources budget strategy approved by the Committee in June 2019, the Council would work towards closing this gap in order to meet its statutory obligations in setting a balanced budget.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the Five Year Medium Term Financial Plan 2020/21 to 2024/25, as outlined in the report, be approved, and
- (2) that it be noted that the Financial Plan would be subject to ongoing review with changes made through future Financial Outlook reports, which would be developed through the budget process.

**THE PLAN FOR NORTH LANARKSHIRE – STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK**

5. With reference to paragraph 2 of the Minute of the Special meeting of this Committee held on 28 February 2019 when, *inter alia*, the Committee had (1) approved The Plan for North Lanarkshire, and (2) noted the indicative reporting schedule for the Strategic Performance Framework and the indicative schedule for the Strategic Self-Evaluation Framework, there was submitted a report by the Head of Business Solutions (a) reminding the Committee that The Plan for North Lanarkshire and its Programme of Work were supported by a range of frameworks which were designed to enable a regular structured approach to assessing progress, measuring success, and identifying, when necessary, areas requiring improvement; (b) presenting, in the Appendix to the report, the detailed Strategic Performance Framework; (c) advising that this Framework comprised a group of performance indicators at three levels, those being (A) The North Lanarkshire Context; (B) Improving Outcomes, and (C) Day to Day Operations; (d) intimating that the aims of these indicators were (A) to provide an overview of performance to evaluate and assess the impact of the Council's work on improving services and outcomes for the people and communities of North Lanarkshire, and (B) to produce evidence that allows for day to day activities, and progress towards achieving the shared ambition, to be regularly monitored, reported, assessed and scrutinised, and (e) outlining details of the proposed next steps.

Thereon, the Head of Business Solutions gave a presentation providing an overview of the Strategic Performance Framework.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the implementation of the Strategic Performance Framework, as set out in the report, be approved;

- (2) that it be noted that there was a need for an ongoing review and development of the Strategic Performance Framework;
- (3) that the proposed next steps, as outlined in the report, be noted, and
- (4) that the report be otherwise noted.

#### **STRATEGIC POLICY FRAMEWORK**

6. With reference to paragraph 2 of the Minute of the Special meeting of this Committee held on 28 February 2019 when the Committee had noted the progress to align the Strategic Policy Framework to The Plan For North Lanarkshire and its Programme of Work, there was submitted a report by the Head of Business Solutions (1) providing an update of progress with reviews of 31 high level strategies, policies and plans within the Strategic Policy Framework, together with details of ongoing work to ensure that the Policy Framework would continue to underpin the delivery of The Plan and its Programme of Work; (2) setting out, in the Appendix to the report, the Review Timetable for the Strategic Policy Framework; (3) advising that, for the reasons detailed therein, the review guidance, which had been designed to help create standardisation and ensure that strategies were developed in an approved, relevant and consultative manner, had been updated.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the progress with the review of the high level strategies, policies and plans in the Strategic Policy Framework, as outlined in the report, be noted;
- (2) that it be noted that the review guidance had been updated, and
- (3) that the report be otherwise noted.

#### **LANARKSHIRE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY 2019-2024**

7. With reference to paragraph 5 of the Minute of the Special meeting of this Committee held on 28 February 2019 when the Committee had agreed (1) that, as part of the engagement process in relation to the development of a pan-Lanarkshire Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy, feedback be provided to the Integration Joint Board on the draft strategy with a view to influencing its strategic direction, and (2) that progress reports thereon be submitted to future meetings of the Committee, there was submitted a report by the Chief Accountable Officer, Adult Health and Social Care, (a) providing an update on the further development of the final draft Lanarkshire Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2024; (b) setting out, in Appendices 1 to 3 to the report, the final draft Strategy; the Summary Strategy, and the Communications and Engagement Report; (c) advising that the population approach which had been utilised had enabled a wide ranging involvement in the development and co-production of the Strategy; (d) intimating that the Communication and Engagement Report described the depth and breadth of engagement which had been undertaken to inform the development of the Strategy; (e) indicating (A) that the final draft Strategy and accompanying documents had also been submitted to the Board of NHS Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire Council, the two Lanarkshire Integration Joint Boards, North Lanarkshire Partnership Board, and South Lanarkshire Community Partnership Board for endorsement, and (B) that the final draft Strategy would also be shared with a range of other organisational committees within the partner organisations for information and feedback; (f) informing that, following approval, in principle, taking on feedback on the final draft strategy, final amendments would be made prior to the publication of the Strategy, and a formal event would be held on 24 October 2019, and (g) recommending that the final draft Strategy be endorsed.

Thereon, the Chief Accountable Officer advised (1) that a session for Elected Members on the Strategy would be held on 9 October 2019, and (2) that, arising out of a request by the Committee, a report on funding from the Scottish Government to further develop and deliver the Strategy would be submitted to a future meeting of the Adult Health and Social Care Committee.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the final draft Lanarkshire Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2020 and accompanying documents, as set out in Appendices 1 to 3 to the report, be endorsed;
- (2) that it be noted that a session for Elected Members on the Strategy would be held on 9 October 2019;
- (3) that it be noted that the Strategy would be formally launched on 24 October 2019;
- (4) that it be noted that a report on funding from the Scottish Government to further develop and deliver the Strategy would be submitted to a future meeting of the Adult Health and Social Care Committee, and
- (5) that the report be otherwise noted.

**TACKLING POVERTY**

8. There was submitted a report by the Head of Communities (1) advising of the Strategic Work Plan approach to address tackling poverty in North Lanarkshire, in line with The Plan For North Lanarkshire, and its Programme of Work; (2) providing an update on the two areas of work under the Programme of Work in relation to tackling poverty, those being:- (a) to develop an overarching Tackling Poverty Strategy for North Lanarkshire, incorporating the Fairness Commission recommendations and national requirements, and linking to the employability services review, and (b) to develop and implement a Child Poverty Delivery Plan; (3) highlighting details of current activity and outcomes in relation to tackling poverty; (4) advising that the Council would be participating in the Challenge Poverty Week from 7 to 13 October 2019, which was co-ordinated by the Poverty Alliance, with a view to highlighting what was being done in North Lanarkshire to address poverty; (5) setting out, in Appendix 2 to the report, a progress update, in respect of the programme of work of the Council's Fairness and Wellbeing Action Group, on practice and policies in relation to poverty, equity and social inclusion in North Lanarkshire; (6) advising that the potential to establish a Tackling Poverty Team, to oversee the overarching Tackling Poverty Strategy and Work Plan, was currently being explored, and (7) indicating that a report on the overarching Tackling Poverty Strategy, including detail on the merits of establishing a Tackling Poverty Team and associated governance arrangements including the potential of standing down the Fairness and Wellbeing Action Group, would be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the update on the development of an overarching Tackling Poverty Strategy and a Child Poverty Delivery Plan, as outlined in the report, be noted;
- (2) that it be noted (a) that the potential to establish a Tackling Poverty Team to oversee the overarching Tackling Poverty Strategy and Work Plan was currently being explored, and (b) that details thereof would be included in a report on the overarching Tackling Poverty Strategy which would be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee, and
- (3) that the approach and timeline for the preparation of the Tackling Poverty Strategy and associated future governance, as outlined in section 2 of the report, be approved.

**NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL BEST VALUE ASSURANCE REPORT - UPDATE ON RECOMMENDATIONS**

9. With reference to paragraph 16 of the Minute of the meeting of the Council held on 20 June 2019 when the Council had noted a report by the Chief Executive on the North Lanarkshire Council Best Value Assurance Report, and the eight recommendations identified by Audit Scotland for improvement actions, there was submitted a report by the Head of Business Solutions providing, in the Appendix to the report, details of the planned actions, and an update on progress against the eight recommendations arising from the Best Value Assurance Report.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the actions to address the eight recommendations contained within the Best Value Assurance Report, as outlined in the Appendix to the report, be approved, and
- (2) that the report by otherwise noted.

**ALEO REVIEW OF ROUTES TO WORK LIMITED**

10. There was submitted a report by the Head of Business Solutions (1) providing details of the findings of the recent service review into Routes to Work Limited which had the purpose of supporting local people, often those furthest removed from the labour market, to access employment, and (2) advising that a multi-disciplinary review team had examined a range of key activities and business areas to identify whether Routes to Work Limited had delivered against its original objectives and requirements, and a means of delivering them, continued to remain relevant and valid.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the completion of the Routes to Work Limited Service Review, which had been undertaken as part of Phase Three of the 2016/17 to 2018/19 ALEO Review Programme, be noted;
- (2) that it be noted that the preferred option identified through the options appraisal was to retain Routes to Work Limited as an ALEO, but to better align its activities with the Council and other strategic partners via the Council's wider review of employability services;
- (3) that it be agreed that Routes to Work Limited should continue to operate at arms length, for the reasons outlined in section 2.7.5 of the report, and
- (4) that it be agreed that opportunities to further align the activities of Routes to Work Limited to the Plan for North Lanarkshire be addressed and implemented via the wider employability review.

**BUCHANAN AND ST AMBROSE HIGH SCHOOLS CAMPUS - INDEPENDENT REVIEW**

11. There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive informing the Committee of (1) the recommendations of the Independent Review into the Buchanan and St. Ambrose High Schools Campus, Coatbridge; (2) the action taken to date and ongoing planned action by the Council to implement the recommendations of the Independent Review, and (3) the additional actions linked to learning from the events at the campus.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the primary finding of the Independent Review that the Buchanan and St. Ambrose High Schools Campus was safe and that any illness experienced could not be linked to any environmental ground, water or air conditions be noted;
- (2) that the recommendations made by the Independent Review and the action taken by the Council to implement these be noted;
- (3) that the extensive work to ensure ongoing water and air quality at the Campus be noted;
- (4) that the other actions taken, and planned, by the Council to go beyond the recommendations of the Independent Review be noted, and
- (5) that the reflection on, and learning from, events at the campus in order to build resilience and improve the Council's response for the future be noted.

**STEPS PRIMARY SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY CAMPUS**

12. There was submitted a report by the Head of Asset and Procurement Solutions (1) advising of a drainage defect at Stepps Primary School and Community Campus, necessitating remediation works which would require the temporary relocation of Stepps Primary School and Nursery through the use of decant accommodation with the costs being met by Education 2010 Public Private Partnership (PPP) Partner; (2) intimating (a) that the Campus was one of the projects within the Education 2010 (PPP) portfolio which included construction, maintenance and life cycle over a 32 year term concession, and (b) that Transform Schools (North Lanarkshire) (TSNL) was the PPP special purpose vehicle which was party to the project agreement with the Council; (3) recommending that the PPP authority's representative be authorised to undertake the necessary negotiations in relation to any interim project agreement revisions and ancillary documents required as a result of the remediation proposal, and (4) intimating that a Forward Communication Plan had been formulated to ensure that all stakeholder groups had timely and accurate information.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the Forward Communication Plan in relation to the issue, as set out in Section 4 of the report, be noted;
- (2) that the PPP authority's representative be authorised to undertake the necessary commercial negotiations relating to any interim project agreement revisions and ancillary documents required as a result of the remediation proposal, and
- (3) that the report be otherwise noted.

**ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE WHISTLEBLOWING PROCEDURE 2018/19**

13. There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Solutions (1) presenting the findings of the annual review of the use of the Council's Whistleblowing Procedure, which provided a mechanism for employees of the Council and other workers within the Council to report a concern about serious wrong doing within the Council, and to do so with security and in confidence, and (2) proposing changes to the procedure to reflect structural changes and guidance in relation to anonymity.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the outcome of the annual review of the Whistleblowing Procedure be noted, and
- (2) that the changes to the Whistleblowing Policy, as set out in the report, to reflect structural changes and guidance in relation to anonymity be approved.

**CONTRACT FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF RECRUITMENT ADVERTISING AND PUBLIC INFORMATION NOTICES**

14. There was submitted a report by the Head of Strategic Communications (1) advising that the most economically advantageous tender received for the management of Recruitment Advertising and Public Information Notices was, after checking, that of Spiritmedia Scotland Limited; (2) intimating that the contract was for an initial two years, and that the Council reserved the right to extend the contract beyond the initial period for up to a further two years, and (3) indicating that the contract value was estimated based on previous requirements (average annual spend of £170,000 per year) and that the proposed contract award value was up to £680,000.

**Decided:** that the award of a contract for a maximum period of four years and to a maximum value of £680,000 to Spiritmedia Scotland Limited for the Management of Recruitment Advertising and Public Information Notices be approved.

**ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC COMMERCIAL PARTNERSHIP - UPDATE**

15. With reference to paragraph 4 of the Minute of the Special meeting of this Committee held on 28 February 2019, there was submitted a report by the Head of Asset and Procurement Solutions (1) providing an update on the development stage activities to explore the scope for a new delivery approach through a strategic commercial partnership for the Enterprise Project, and (2) seeking approval on the principles of the scope identified to permit continuation to the final Outline Business Case stage.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the principles of the service's activities, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, be taken forward as the scope for the Enterprise Strategic Commercial Partnership for the purposes of developing the final Outline Business Case;
- (2) that it be noted that all activity necessary to progress the project to final Outline Business Case would be based on the scope, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report;
- (3) that it be noted that the final Outline Business Case, which would include the final recommended approach for the main procurement, would be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee for consideration, and
- (4) that it be noted that all existing contracts would be kept under review, with the option of implementing extensions until the Enterprise Partnership was fully in place.

**REFERRAL FROM YOUTH, EQUALITIES AND EMPOWERMENT COMMITTEE - EQUALITY STRATEGY 2019-2024**

16. In terms of a referral from the Youth, Equalities and Empowerment Committee, at its meeting held on 26 August 2019, when that Committee, following consideration of a report by the Head of Communities on the Council's Equality Strategy 2019-2024 which underscored the Council's
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commitment to equality and human rights and set out an approach that ensured that equality was embedded within the every day work of the Council through five key underpinning objectives, had (1) endorsed the Equality Strategy, and (2) referred the report to this Committee for consideration, there was submitted the said report by the Head of Communities.

**Decided:** that the Equality Strategy 2019-2024, as set out in the report, be approved.