

Motherwell, 27 November 2019 at 10 am.

A Meeting of the **FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

PRESENT

Councillor Burrows, Convener; Councillor McNeil, Vice-Convener; Councillors J. Ashraf, Beveridge, Burgess, Campbell, Castles, Curran, Docherty, Fisher, Fotheringham, Gourlay, Hume, C. Johnston, T. Johnston, Jones, Lennon, MacGregor, Morgan, O'Rourke, Reddin, Shields, Stevenson, Annette Valentine and Watson.

ALSO PRESENT

In accordance with Standing Order 64(a) Councillors Carragher and Quigley attended as substitutes for Councillors D. Ashraf and Graham respectively.

CHAIR

Councillor Burrows (Convener) presided.

IN ATTENDANCE

The Head of Asset and Procurement Solutions; Head of Financial Solutions; Head of Legal and Democratic Solutions; Head of People and Organisational Development; Employee Service Centre Manager; Group Manager (Estates) and Committee Officer.

APOLOGIES

Councillors D. Ashraf, Cochrane, M. Coyle, Cullen, Currie, Di Mascio, Farooq, Graham, Larson, Linden, Logue and McManus.

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

1. Councillors Lennon, McNeil and O'Rourke each declared an interest in paragraph 22, by virtue of their appointment as Members of North Lanarkshire Properties LLP, left the meeting and took no part in the determination of the item.

MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES OF 8 AND 31 OCTOBER 2019

2. There was submitted the Minutes of the meetings of the Joint Consultative Committee for Local Government Employees of 8 and 31 October 2019.

Decided: that the Minutes be approved.

MINUTE OF THE MEETING OF THE EMPLOYEE APPEALS SUB-COMMITTEE OF 10 OCTOBER 2019

3. There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Employee Appeals Sub-Committee held on 10 October 2019.

Decided: that the Minute be approved.

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND WELLBEING

4. There was submitted a report by the Head of People and Organisational Development (1) providing an update on the programme of work aligned to employee engagement and wellbeing; (2) detailing the five priority areas of focus in relation to employee engagement; (3) setting out the actions and progress to date, and (4) outlining the plan for the coming year and beyond to ensure that employee engagement and sustainable performance continued to drive forward across the Council.

Decided:

- (1) that the excellent progress of the programme of work aligned to employee engagement and wellbeing be noted, and
- (2) that the ongoing direction of travel, as outlined in the report, be supported.

SEXUAL ENTERTAINMENT VENUES LICENSING

5. There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Solutions (1) advising of the licensing provision for Sexual Entertainment Venues (SEVs); (2) highlighting that there were currently no known premises within the North Lanarkshire area providing sexual entertainment in terms of the statutory definition; (3) seeking approval to conduct a public consultation on the licensing of SEVs in North Lanarkshire, and (4) intimating that if, following consultation, Committee was minded to licence SEVs in the North Lanarkshire area, the Council would require to publish a detailed policy statement at least 28 days before the new licensing system came into operation.

Decided:

- (1) that the content of the report be noted, and
- (2) that it be agreed that a public consultation be carried out in order to gather evidence on (a) whether SEVs in North Lanarkshire should be licensed and, if so, what the appropriate number of venues should be, and (b) if it was decided to licence such venues, what information should be included in a SEV licensing policy statement.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REPORT

6. There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Solutions (1) providing, in Appendix 1 to the report, details of the number of Freedom of Information and Environmental Information requests received by the Council during 2018/19, and (2) detailing, in Appendices 2 and 3 of the report, the cases submitted for internal review with an indication of the category of applicant.

Decided: that the report be noted.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL QUADRENNIAL ELECTIONS 2019

7. There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Solutions (1) advising of the outcome of the recent Quadrennial Elections for Community Councils in North Lanarkshire, following the close of the nomination process on Monday, 9 September 2019; (2) highlighting that sufficient nominations had been received to establish Tannochside Community Council, and that, following the establishment of this Community Council on 8 October 2019, a request had been received to rename the Community Council from Tannochside to Thorniewood, and (3) seeking approval for an event to be arranged in order to recognise the service of former Community Councillors.

Decided:

- (1) that the current status of Community Councils in North Lanarkshire following the Quadrennial Elections be noted;
- (2) that the change of name of Tannochside Community Council to Thorniewood Community Council be approved, and
- (3) that an event be arranged in order to recognise the service of former Community Councillors.

REGISTRATION SERVICE - REVIEW OF FESTIVE OPENING HOURS

8. With reference to paragraph 8 of the Minute of the meeting of the Council held on 3 October 2019, when it was agreed that a report be submitted to this Committee in relation to the possibility of registration offices being open during the festive period (excluding weekends and bank holidays), there was submitted a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Solutions (1) advising (a) that the Registration Service introduced festive closure arrangements in December 2012, and (b) that, from 2014 onwards, one registration office in the North Lanarkshire area was open on alternate days; (2) outlining the staffing arrangements for each office; (3) providing an analysis of registration of deaths over the festive period in 2018 and for a period thereafter; (4) highlighting that, by opening one office on each of the days during the festive closure, demand for this service had been met; (5) intimating that there was no record of any complaints about the availability of the Registration Service, since the introduction of the festive closure in 2012, and (6) providing, in the Appendices to the report, details of death registrations for the festive period in 2018/19.

Decided:

- (1) that the content of the report be noted, and
- (2) that it be agreed that the current arrangements in place for the registration of deaths during the festive period remain unchanged.

THE PLAN FOR NORTH LANARKSHIRE: STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

9. With reference to paragraph 5 of the Minute of the meeting of the Policy and Strategy Committee held on 26 September 2019, when the implementation of the Strategic Performance Framework was agreed, there was submitted a report by the Head of Business Solutions (1) outlining the next steps in terms of the reporting arrangements to Service Committees for the Strategic Performance Framework; (2) advising that the aim was (a) to ensure that evidence was presented to Committee that allowed day to day activities and progress towards achieving the shared ambition to be regularly reported, monitored, assessed and scrutinised, and (b) to enable performance issues to be identified and any remedial action undertaken to ensure that the Council remained on track towards achieving the shared ambition; (3) detailing, in the Appendix to the report, the Strategic Performance Framework extracts relevant to this Committee, and (4) intimating that future reports would be submitted to Committee during 2020 providing performance against the items outlined in the Strategic Performance Framework extracts.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Solutions gave an overview of the report. Thereafter, the Panel requested clarification as to whether specific information could be included within future reports in relation to the Scottish Welfare Fund (SWF). The Head of Financial Solutions agreed to discuss the inclusion of specific SWF performance information with the Head of Business Solutions.

Decided:

- (1) that the content of the report and Appendices be noted;
- (2) that the next steps, as outlined in the report, be noted, and
- (3) that the Head of Financial Solutions discuss the potential inclusion of specific SWF performance information with the Head of Business Solutions.

REVENUE MONITORING REPORTS

(1) REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S AND OTHER CORPORATE SERVICES 1 APRIL TO 11 OCTOBER 2019

10. There was submitted a report by the Head of Financial Solutions (1) summarising the Chief Executive's and other corporate services financial performance for the period 1 April to 11 October 2019; (2) illustrating the projected outturn as at 31 March 2020; (3) highlighting and explaining the major outturn variances, as per the Council's approved Financial Regulations; (4) intimating that the Council approved its General Fund Revenue Budget on 21 February 2019, of which £70.670m represented the Net Revenue Budget for the Chief Executive's and other corporate services; (5) advising that the Service was currently projecting a year-end balanced budget for the financial year, and (6) detailing (a) that the 2019/20 budget incorporated £1.957m worth of savings previously approved by the Council, and (b) that it was anticipated that £1.726m worth of savings would be delivered by the financial year-end.

Decided: that the financial position of the 2019/20 Chief Executive's and other corporate services Revenue Budget be noted.

(2) REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - COUNCIL SUMMARY 1 APRIL TO 11 OCTOBER 2019

11. There was submitted a report by the Head of Financial Solutions (1) providing an update on the overall position for the General Fund Account, Housing Revenue Account and Adult Social Care for the financial year to 31 March 2020; (2) advising that the report consolidated the budget monitoring position of all Services; (3) highlighting and explaining major variances, as per the Council's approved Financial Regulations; (4) setting out (a) in Appendix 1 of the report, a financial summary by Service; (b) in Appendix 2 of the report, the anticipated commitment against the earmarked reserves, and (c) in Appendix 3 of the report, availability of one-off funds from the Change Management Fund; (4) intimating that the Council approved its General Fund Revenue Budget on 21 February 2019, and, following the issue of Local Government Finance Circular 2/2019 in March 2019 and notification of additional funding from the Scottish Government, this gave a revised budget of £762.942m against which the Council was currently reporting a deficit of £0.351m, and (5) detailing that the 2019/20 budget incorporated £27.666m of savings of which it was anticipated that £25.070m worth of savings would be delivered by the financial year-end, with replacement savings of £2.424m identified to date, leaving a shortfall of £0.172m.

Decided:

- (1) that the financial position of the 2019/20 Revenue Budget be noted, and
- (2) that the content of the report be noted.

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2019/20 MONITORING REPORT 1 APRIL TO 11 OCTOBER 2019

12. There was submitted a report by the Head of Financial Solutions (1) providing an update on resources and expenditure on 2019/20 budgets for the Council's Capital Programmes; (2) advising the provisional year-end outturn position and the resultant variances, and (3) detailing, in the Appendices to the report, (a) the Capital Programme 2019/20 budget movements, and (b) the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Capital Investment Programme summaries 2019/20, as at 11 October 2019.

Decided: that the financial position of the Council's Capital Programmes, as at 11 October 2019, be noted.

TREASURY MANAGEMENT MONITORING REPORT FOR QUARTER ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2019

13. There was submitted a report by the Head of Financial Solutions (1) advising on the quarterly Treasury Management Activity for the period from 1 April to 30 September 2019; (2) informing of debt restructuring, borrowing, investments and the interest rate movements during that period, and (3) providing, in Appendix 2 of the report, a summary of key treasury and prudential indicators as at quarter ended 30 September 2019.

Decided: that the Treasury Management Activity for the quarter ended 30 September 2019, including the positive performance against the key treasury and prudential indicators, be noted.

PAYMENT OF LOCAL TAXATION AND BENEFIT UPDATE

14. There was submitted a report by the Head of Financial Solutions (1) providing an update on the payment performance for Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates, the administration of Welfare Benefits and the Council Tax Reduction Scheme as at 31 October 2019; (2) advising (a) that the current year collection of Council Tax at the end of September 2019 was 64.4%, which was up by 0.1% in relation to the position at the same point in the the previous year, and (b) that the Non Domestic Rates collection as at 31 October 2019 was 65.4% which was 0.1% lower in comparison with the previous year; (3) detailing a comparison of the performance at the end of September against the same period in the previous year, in relation to the speed of processing benefit applications and changes, which had significantly improved in line with expectations; (4) providing an update on the Scottish Welfare Fund (SWF) spend, and (5) highlighting that the SWF spend would exceed the Scottish Government allocation and, as a result, the priority level had been assessed and would be moved to "high most compelling" as of 1 December 2019, in order to ensure spend remained on budget by year-end.

Decided: that the report be noted.

GENERAL DEBTORS DEBT WRITE-OFF 2019/20

15. There was submitted a report by the Head of Financial Solutions (1) summarising the outstanding local taxation accounts which were deemed uncollectable following all attempts at recovery; (2) advising that a bad debt provision had been included within the Annual Accounts recognising the non-collection of these accounts; (3) detailing that the Head of Financial Solutions, under delegated authority, had written-off £299,568.04 of debts under £500, and (4) seeking approval to write-off £3,661,001.67 of debts greater than £500.

Decided:

- (1) that the decision of the Head of Financial Solutions, under delegated authority, to write-off debts under £500 totalling £299,568.04 be noted, and
- (2) that it be agreed to write-off debts over £500 totalling £3,661,001.67.

CONTRACT RENEWAL - ITRENT

16. There was submitted a report by the Head of People and Organisational Development (1) advising that the current contract for the iTrent System would come to an end on 24 December 2019; (2) detailing that it was proposed that a new contract be awarded to Midland HR for the continued use of the iTrent System, with procurement being undertaken as a direct award via the existing Scottish Government Collaborative Procurement Framework Agreement; (3) intimating that the contract award would be from 25 December 2019 to 24 December 2026, with the option to extend the contract up to a maximum of seven years; (4) highlighting that, as part of the new contract, Midland HR had committed to providing additional service functionality, in line with the DigitalNL ambition, which would create opportunity for further transformation of the People and Organisational Development Service across the Council, and (5) providing details of (a) the current contract arrangements, costs and quality of benefits, and (b) the proposed new contract, including costs, projected benefits and the potential return in investment to be realised in future years.

Decided:

- (1) that it be agreed to award the contract for the continued use of the iTrent system to Midland HR for the period 25 December 2019 to 24 December 2026;
- (2) that the plans for the implementation of additional self-service functionality, as outlined in the report, be agreed, and
- (3) that the content of the report and Appendices be noted.

CONTRACT AWARD: METAL DOORS AND BLACKSMITH WORKS - SERVICE AND MAINTENANCE 2020/24

17. There was submitted a report by the Head of Asset and Procurement Solutions (1) seeking approval to award the contract for the Metal Doors and Blacksmith Works – Service and Maintenance 2020/24 to City Gate Construction (Scotland) Limited; (2) advising that the contract was for an initial period of two years from the date of the award of the contract, with the right to extend the contract for an additional period up to a maximum of a further two years, and (3) intimating that the value of the contract was £3.080m.

Decided: that it be agreed that the contract for the Metal Doors and Blacksmith Works – Service and Maintenance 2020/24 be awarded to City Gate Construction (Scotland) Limited for a maximum value of £3.080m for a period of two years, with the right to extend the contract for up to a maximum of a further two years.

CONFERENCE: SCOTTISH LICENSING LAW AND PRACTICE - THE ESSENTIAL LICENSING UPDATE 2019

18. There was submitted a report by the Head of the Legal and Democratic Solutions advising that an invitation had been received in relation to Elected Members' attendance at the Scottish Licensing Law and Practice Conference entitled the Essential Licensing Update 2019.
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Decided: that it be agreed that one Elected Member attend the conference in relation to Essential Licensing Update on Friday, 6 December 2019.

RE-ALLOCATION OF LAND

(1) LAND AT DYKEHEAD ROAD, AIRDRIE - TRANSFER FROM ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS SERVICE TO ENTERPRISE AND HOUSING RESOURCES

19. There was submitted a report by the Head of Asset and Procurement Solutions (1) seeking approval to reallocate the area of land at Dykehead Road, Airdrie, as detailed on the plan appended to the report, from the remit of the Environmental Assets Service to that of Enterprise and Housing Resources for the purpose of the construction of new build council housing; (2) highlighting that a local Elected Member had raised questions about the loss of the amenity area for the local community, and (3) proposing that the approval be granted on the understanding that any Sport Scotland requirements be met and appropriate consents obtained before any development commenced.

Decided:

- (1) that the content of the report and Appendix be noted;
- (2) that it be agreed that the land at Dykehead Road, Airdrie, as detailed on the plan appended to the report, be reallocated from the Council's Environmental Assets Service to Enterprise and Housing Resources for the purpose of the construction of new build council housing, and
- (3) that the approval be granted on the understanding that any Sport Scotland requirements be met, and appropriate consents obtained, before any development commenced.

(2) LAND AT MABEL STREET, - MOTHERWELL - TRANSFER FROM ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS SERVICE TO ENTERPRISE AND HOUSING RESOURCES

20. There was submitted a report by the Head of Asset and Procurement Solutions (1) seeking approval to reallocate the area of land at Mabel Street, Motherwell, as detailed On the plan appended to the report, from the remit of the Environmental Assets Service to that of Enterprise and Housing Resources for the purpose of the construction of new build council housing; (2) highlighting that at present Forgewood Boxing Club occupied a single storey hutted facility on the site and had yet to find an alternative location, and (3) proposing that approval be granted on the understanding that reasonable steps would be undertaken to provide the boxing club with alternative premises, prior to any work on the site commencing.

Decided:

- (1) that the content of the report and Appendix be noted;
- (2) that it be agreed that the area of land at Mabel Street, Motherwell, as detailed On the plan appended to the report, be re-allocated from the Council's Environmental Assets Service to Enterprise and Housing Resources for the purpose of the construction of new build council housing, and
- (3) that approval be granted on the understanding that reasonable steps would be undertaken to provide the boxing club with alternative premises, prior to any work to develop the site commencing.

CUMBERNAULD INDOOR BOWLING CLUB - PROPOSED LEASE VARIATION

21. With reference to paragraph 39 of the Minute of the meeting of the former Infrastructure Committee held on 7 February 2018, when a 12 year lease extension was granted to Cumbernauld Indoor Bowling Club, there was submitted a report by the Head of Asset and Procurement Solutions seeking approval to vary the existing lease and grant an unexpired lease term of 25 years to the Club in order to satisfy potential grant funding requirements.

Decided:

- (1) that it be agreed that the lease be varied, as per the lease terms detailed in Section 2.2 of the report, and
- (2) that the Head of Asset and Procurement Solutions be authorised to adjust all other terms and conditions.

Councillors Lennon, McNeil and O'Rourke, prior to consideration of the following item of business, each declared an interest by virtue of their appointment as Members of North Lanarkshire Properties LLP, left the meeting and took no part in the determination of the item.

NORTH LANARKSHIRE PROPERTIES LLP - CONSENT FOR SALE OF VARIOUS PROPERTIES

22. There was submitted a report by the Head of Asset and Procurement Solutions seeking approval for the sale of North Lanarkshire Property Limited Liability Partnership's (LLP) interest in various properties.

Decided: that consent be granted for North Lanarkshire Properties LLP to dispose of the properties as detailed in Section 2.1 of the report and as required under the terms of the LLP Agreement.

It was agreed in terms of Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, that the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item on the grounds that the business involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 8 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

TOWN CENTRE FUND - ACQUISITIONS

23. There was submitted a report by the Head of Asset and Procurement Solutions seeking approval for various acquisitions, as detailed in Sections 2.5 and 2.6 of the report, through the Town Centre Fund.

Decided:

- (1) that the proposed acquisitions, as detailed in Sections 2.5 and 2.6 of the report, be approved, and
- (2) that the Head of Asset and Procurement Solutions be authorised to adjust all other terms and conditions.