

STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minute of Meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee held in the Council Chambers, Fourth Floor, Council Building, 2 High Street, Perth on Wednesday 11 June 2014 at 10.00am.

Present: Councillors I Miller, A Grant, B Band, I Campbell, D Cuthbert, D Doogan, J Kellas, A MacLellan, D Pover, M Roberts, W Robertson (substituting for P Barrett) A Stewart, B Vaughan, W Wilson and A Younger.

In Attendance: B Malone, Chief Executive; J Fyffe, Depute Chief Executive and Executive Director (Education and Children's Services); J Valentine, Executive Director (Environment); J Walker, Executive Director (Housing and Community Care); S Crawford and B Renton (both the Environment Service); K Fraser, (Housing and Community Care); S Bywalec, K Donaldson, C Flynn, G Fogg, C Irons, K Mackie, C Robertson, J Symon and G Taylor (all Chief Executive's Service).

Also in Attendance: G Battison and N O'Connor, Audit Scotland.

Apologies: Provost L Grant and Councillor P Barrett.

Councillor I Miller, Convener, Presiding.

418. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES

The Convener welcomed all those present to the meeting and apologies/substitutes were noted as above.

419. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest in terms of the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

420. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

(i) Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

The minute of meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 23 April 2014 (Arts. 240 - 248) was submitted, approved as a correct record and authorised for signature.

(ii) Property Sub-Committee of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

The minute of meeting of the Property Sub-Committee of the Strategic Policy and Resources of 8 January 2014 was submitted and noted.
(Appendix I)

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(iii) Employees Joint Consultative Committee

The minute of meeting of the Employees Joint Consultative Committee of 27 February 2014 was submitted and noted. **(Appendix II)**

(iv) Appeal Sub-Committee

The minute of meeting of the Appeal Sub-Committee of 9 May 2014 was submitted and noted. **(Appendix III)**

421. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S SERVICE JOINT BUSINESS MANAGEMENT AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2014/15 AND ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2013/14

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive (14/254) presenting the Chief Executive's Service Joint Business Management and Improvement Plan 2014/15 and Annual Performance Report 2013/14.

Resolved:

- (i) The Chief Executive's Service Joint Business Management and Improvement Plan 2014/15 and Annual Performance Report 2013/14 be approved.
- (ii) It be noted that Report 14/254 would be submitted to the Scrutiny Committee on 11 June 2014 for scrutiny and comment.
- (iii) A report be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee on Arm's Length External Organisations (ALEO's) following consultation with the Scrutiny Committee.

422. COMPOSITE CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2014/15 to 2020/21 – PROPOSED VIREMENTS

Following financial close on the contract for the upgrade of Crieff Primary School the projected cost of the scheme has been agreed at £11,800,000, including land purchase. This is a saving of £2,200,000 against the approved budget.

The provision of new curriculum and community sports facilities at Perth High School had originally been estimated to cost £2,700,000, including a £500,000 contribution from sportScotland. However, in order to provide these school and community facilities and to meet the requirements of the curriculum, the total cost of the project has now been estimated at £3,950,000.

Motion (Councillors I Miller and A Grant) – The following virements within the Composite Capital Programme 2014/15 to 2020/21 towards the cost of sports facilities at Perth High School be approved:-

- (i) £1,200,000 from savings identified at Crieff Primary School.**
- (ii) £50,000 from the Modernising Secondary Schools Programme.**

Amendment (Councillors W Wilson and W Robertson):-

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- (i) The virements of £1,200,000 from savings identified at Crieff Primary School and £50,000 from the Modernising Secondary Schools Programme towards the cost of sports facilities at Perth High School be approved.
- (ii) Officers be requested to submit reports to a future meeting of this Committee on (a) the detail of the cost variances in the projects at Crieff Primary School and Perth High School; and (b) developing a more robust process for cost estimates for capital schemes in future.

In accordance with Standing Order 44, a roll call was taken.

6 members voted for the Amendment as follows:

Councillors I Campbell, D Cuthbert, M Roberts, W Robertson, A Stewart and W Wilson.

8 members voted for the Motion as follows:

Councillors I Miller, A Grant, B Band, D Doogan, J Kellas, A Maclellan, D Pover and A Younger.

Councillor B Vaughan abstained.

Resolved:

In accordance with the Motion.

423. EMPLOYER SUPPORTED VOLUNTEERING POLICY

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Human Resources Manager (14/255) seeking approval for the introduction of an Employer Supported Volunteering Policy for the Council's workforce.

Resolved:

- (i) The Employer Supported Volunteering Policy attached as Appendix 1 to Report 14/255 be approved.
- (ii) A report be submitted to this Committee in 12 months time on the volunteering which has taken place.

424. AUTHORITY TO WRITE OFF DEBTS AND OBSOLETE STOCK

There was submitted a report by the Head of Finance (14/256) (1) seeking approval to write off identified debts in respect of Sales ledger; Council Tax (including Water and Waste Water charges); Non-Domestic Rates; Irrecoverable Rents; Housing Benefit Overpayments and Car Park Trading Account Income and (2) approval to write off obsolete stock and outstanding reconciliation items.

Resolved:

That all amounts detailed in Section 2 of and in Appendices 1 – 5 to Report 14/256 be written off.

425. AUDIT SCOTLAND OPTIONS APPRAISAL REPORT

There was submitted a report by the Depute Director (Environment) (14/257) providing (1) a summary of the report published by Audit Scotland in March 2014 'Options Appraisal: Are You Getting it Right?'; and (2) a number of self-evaluation questions for councillors and officers extracted from the publication.

Gillian Battison of Audit Scotland was in attendance to speak to the report and answer members' questions.

Resolved:

- (i) The findings of the 'Options Appraisal: Are You Getting it Right?' as detailed in Appendix 3 of Report 14/257 be noted.
- (ii) The key areas for improvement as detailed at Section 4 of Report 14/257 be approved.
- (iii) The questions for officers and councillors as detailed in Appendices 1 and 2 to Report 14/257 be noted.
- (iv) In relation to Appendix 2 of Report 14/257, it be noted that the role of the Modernising Governance Member Officer Working Group is to consider and not to 'approve' the final reports in relation to transformation projects and best value reviews.

426. AUDIT SCOTLAND OVERVIEW OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN SCOTLAND 2014

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive (14/258) providing (1) a summary of the report published by Audit Scotland in March 2014 'An Overview of Local Government in Scotland 2014'; (2) the Council's current position against the identified priority areas for 2014 and (3) a number of self-evaluation questions for Councillors.

Gillian Battison of Audit Scotland was in attendance to speak to the report and answer members' questions.

Resolved:

The findings of the 'Overview of Local Government in Scotland 2014' as detailed in Appendix 2 to Report 14/258 be noted.

427. REVIEW OF FREE STANDING WALLS AND SCHOOL STRUCTURES

There was submitted a report by the Head of Property Services (14/259) on the review of school structures after the tragic incident in March 2014 at Liberton High School, Edinburgh.

Resolved:

- (i) The details of the review as detailed in Appendix 1 to Report 14/259 be noted.
- (ii) The Head of Property Services be requested to report back to this Committee in six months time on the actions identified in the review.

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