

MINUTE VOLUME

11 December 2024

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MINUTE
of
EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

Minute of meeting held at 5.00pm in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 11 September 2024.

Present:

Councillor Andrew Anderson	Councillor Chris Lunday
Councillor Caroline Bamforth	Councillor David Macdonald (*)
Councillor Tony Buchanan	Councillor Jim McLean (*)
Deputy Provost Kate Campbell	Provost Mary Montague
Councillor Angela Convery	Councillor Andrew Morrison
Councillor Betty Cunningham (*)	Councillor Owen O'Donnell (Leader)
Councillor Paul Edlin	Councillor Katie Pragnell
Councillor Annette Ireland	Councillor Gordon Wallace

Provost Montague in the Chair

Attending:

Steven Quinn, Chief Executive; Caitriona McAuley, Director of Environment; Louise Pringle, Director of Business Operations and Partnerships; Mark Ratter, Director of Education; Julie Murray, Chief Officer, Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP); Kenny Marwick, Head of Environment (Operations); Siobhan McColgan, Head of Education Services (Equality and Equity); Raymond Prior, Head of Children's Services and Justice, Chief Social Work Officer; Kirsty Stanners, Head of Finance; Gerry Mahon, Chief Officer (Legal & Procurement); John Buchanan, Operations Manager; Arlene Cassidy, Children's Services Strategy Manager; Barry Tudhope, Democratic Services Manager; John Burke, Democratic Services Officer; and Lesleyann Burns, Assistant Democratic Services Officer.

(*) indicates remote attendance.

Apologies:

Councillors Devlin and Merrick.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1002. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

PROVOST'S AWARD – CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

Before moving to the first item of business, the Provost referred to the community volunteer work of Sandra Douglas of the Back to School Bank in Spiersbridge. This service ensured that children across East Renfrewshire had brand new school uniforms and other school supplies

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they needed, while giving dignity and compassionate support to their carers. The organisation had helped 400 children over the past year.

The Provost recognised Mrs Douglas as the driving force behind the organisation and, while recognising that the calibre of nominations had been very high, she was pleased to give the award to her for her outstanding work. The Provost presented Mrs Douglas with her award and other members of the Council spoke in glowing terms about her ongoing work in the community.

Mrs Douglas responded in appropriate terms, thanking the Council for its support over the year and going forward.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

1003. The Council considered the Minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 11 September 2024 and 26 September 2024.

The minutes were approved.

MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES

1004. The Council considered and approved the Minutes of the meetings of the undernoted:-

- (a) Cabinet (Police & Fire) – 12 September 2024;
- (b) Special Licensing Committee – 17 September 2024;
- (c) Education Committee – 26 September 2024;
- (d) Audit & Scrutiny Committee – 26 September 2024;
- (e) Planning Applications Committee – 2 October 2024;
- (f) Local Review Body – 2 October 2024;
- (g) Cabinet – 3 October 2024;
- (h) Licensing Committee – 8 October 2024

STATEMENTS BY CONVENER AND REPRESENTATIVES ON JOINT BODIES AND COMMITTEES

1005. Two statements had been received and summarised as follows:

- (a) Councillor Anderson – Convener for Education and Equalities

Councillor Anderson gave an update on the re-opening of the tennis courts at Cowan Park following their renovation. Over 200 local primary school pupils had participated in supervised play with Sports Leaders from St Luke's High School. The Courts would host a number of events aimed at getting local people active and learning to play the game. The courts could be booked using a new booking system with associated gate access technology, meaning it was now easier to book a court in advance and guarantee availability.

He also remarked on the Summer Reading Challenge, where public libraries across Scotland supported children aged 4 to 11 to participate in reading during the summer holidays. Over 800 children had participated in the event and it was expected that East Renfrewshire would continue to be among the top quartile in terms of participation and completion.

Finally, Councillor Anderson referred to the East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure Trust Staff awards at Dalmeny Hotel at the end of September. Staff had been nominated for awards by their colleagues and recognised for outstanding performance in a number of categories, reflecting the Trust's core values of Professionalism, Pursuit of Excellence, Teamwork, Community and Customer Service. Councillor Anderson offered his congratulate all nominees and winners and thanked them for their outstanding contribution to the communities of East Renfrewshire.

(b) Councillor Pragnell – Convener for Social Work and Health

Councillor Pragnell reported on the recent meeting of the Integration Joint Board (IJB) where, the audited Annual Report and Accounts for the IJB was agreed. She indicated that the IJB had received an unqualified audit opinion, however, the key message remained financial sustainability, with concern over the current and ongoing level of savings required.

An overall projected overspend of just under £1.7 million had been reported, mainly against the NHS element of the budget.

Councillor Pragnell also provided an update on the charging for services in 2024/2025 and beyond. A seminar had been planned for the end of October to further discuss this, with proposals to be presented to Cabinet in December. The other items on the meeting were also summarised for members' information.

PROVOST'S ENGAGEMENTS

1006. The Council considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships, providing details of civic engagements attended and civic duties performed by Provost Montague since the meeting on 11 September 2024.

The Council noted the report.

AUDIT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 26 SEPTEMBER 2024 – INTERIM TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT FOR 2024/25 – QUARTER 1

1007. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee of 26 September 2024 (Page 726, Item 705 refers), when it had been agreed to recommend to the Council that the organisation for investment of surplus funds be approved in accordance with Appendix 8 to the report, the Council considered a report by the Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer) reporting on the Treasury Management activities for the first quarter of 2024/2025.

The Council agreed that the organisations for investment of surplus funds be approved in accordance with Appendix 8 to the report.

CABINET – 3 OCTOBER 2024 – GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME

1008. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Cabinet of 3 October 2024 (Page 973, Item 985 refers), when it had been agreed to recommend to the Council that the proposed adjustments to the General Fund Capital Programme and the use of Developer Contributions to fund the increase in the total budget for Maidenhill Primary School be approved, the Council considered a report by the Head of Finance, recommending adjustments to the Programme

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as at 30 June 2024 in light of developments that had arisen since the Programme had been approved.

In response to questions on the Maidenhill Primary School Extension, it was confirmed that, while no final price had been established, it was vital to approve the extra funding to time was not lost on the project. The situation in terms of the use of developer contributions was also clarified as these had been earmarked for use in education, justifying this spend.

Following further clarification in terms of developments in the Aurs Road project, the Council:-

- (a) approved the movements within the 2024/2025 Programme;
- (b) approved the use of Developer Contributions to fully fund the estimated £0.526m increase in the total budget for the Maidenhill Primary School Extension; and
- (c) noted the shortfall of £0.215m and that income and expenditure on the programme would be managed and reported on a regular basis.

CABINET – 3 OCTOBER 2024 – HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME

1009. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Cabinet of 14 December 2023 (Page 974, Item 986 refers), when it had been agreed to recommend to the Council that the proposed adjustments to the Housing Capital Programme be approved, the Council considered a report by the Head of Finance, monitoring expenditure as at 30 June 2024 against the approved 2024/25 Programme.

The Council:-

- (a) noted and approved the current movements within the Programme; and
- (b) noted the shortfall of £0.101m and that income and expenditure on the Programme would be managed and reported on a regular basis.

THE NEW EAST RENFREWSHIRE PROMISE BOARD AND DELIVERING OUR CORPORATE PARENTING RESPONSIBILITIES

1010. The Council considered a report by the Head of Children's Services and Criminal Justice, Health and Social Care Partnership, on the proposed creation of the East Renfrewshire Promise Board and the introduction of a three tier Promise Workforce Learning Programme.

The Promise to care experienced children and young people that, *"You will grow up loved, safe and respected. And by 2030, that promise must be kept"* had been made following the Independent Care Review, which found that the current "care system" in Scotland wasn't working. The Promise, and associated 10 year plan, which were launched on 5 February 2020, were attached as an appendix to the report and summarised within the report.

The report also provided context around the corporate parenting responsibilities of involved agencies in terms of looked after and care experienced children and young people. This was recognised as the collective responsibility of the Council, elected members, employees and other key partners to provide the best possible care and protection. The key to delivering this would be for all corporate parents to commit to full implementation of all aspects of the Promise 10 Year Plan and the foundations of Voice, Family, Care, People and Scaffolding which underpinned it.

In order to meet the Council's obligations in terms of the Promise, it was proposed to establish an East Renfrewshire Promise Board, and the model for this was outlined in the report. To accompany this, a three tier Promise Workforce Learning Programme had been devised to support Promise Champions, their workforce and all corporate parents to understand the purpose and intent of the Promise. The full programme was attached as an appendix to the report.

In discussion, the Council broadly welcomed the report and the direction of travel in terms of working to deliver on the Promise. Members also expressed thanks for a seminar which had taken place prior to the meeting which had been very informative in the work currently ongoing within East Renfrewshire and the impact it was having.

The Council noted:-

- (a) approved the proposed East Renfrewshire Promise Board model;
- (b) delegated authority to the Chief Social Work Officer, as set out in paragraph 13 of the report, to determine Board membership in the event of a surplus of nominations from the Council's elected members; and;
- (c) agreed to the new three tier Promise Workforce Learning Programme and to promote attendance and engagement across the partnership in East Renfrewshire.

CHIEF SOCIAL WORK OFFICER'S ANNUAL REPORT 2023/2024

1011. The Council considered the Chief Social Work Officer's (CSWO's) Annual Report for 2023/24, seeking approval for the content for submission to the Office of the Chief Social Work Advisor, Scottish Government.

The Annual Report, a copy which was appended to the report, provided an overview of professional social work activity within East Renfrewshire in 2022/23 through the delivery of statutory functions and responsibilities held by the CSWO. Although there were many examples of success to celebrate and build on, there continued to be significant challenges and risks facing social work and social care, with financial sustainability and uncertainty being core pressures. These challenges could not be met without the continued commitment and dedication of social work and social care staff.

There followed a discussion around the increase in enquiries for Social Work services, the effect of ongoing financial restrictions on the provision of care, the increased in recorded incidents of domestic abuse and the potential reasons for the increase. The Council was broadly thankful for the information provided and for the work of the Chief Social Work Officer and his team in providing the best possible service they could in difficult circumstances.

The Council agreed to approve the content of the Chief Social Work Officer's Annual Report, attached as Appendix 1 to the report, for submission to the Office of the Chief Social Work Advisor, Scottish Government.

BROWN BIN (GARDEN/FOOD WASTE) COLLECTION PROPOSAL

1012. The Council considered a report by the Director of Environment on proposed changes to the collection of brown bins (garden and food waste) from Monday 5 May 2025.

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The report outlined the current situation in terms of brown bin collection as a weekly collection, 50 per year. The collection of garden waste required an annual permit, while the collection of food waste was statutory and collected without a need for a permit. Approximately 22,800 permits had been issued for 2024/25, along with 442 permits for an additional brown bin, demonstrating a high demand for the service.

Following a benchmarking exercise, it had been discovered that East Renfrewshire was the only council that offered a weekly collection of garden waste, with the vast majority either charging for the service, or not providing it at all. Only 3 councils did not currently charge for the collection of garden waste, and two of those were seeking to introduce charges in 2025/26. A full breakdown of the information from the benchmarking exercise was provided in the report.

It was indicated that garden waste collections were expected to operate at an under recovery of £753,398 after disposal costs for the collected waste. In response to this, and to bring the Council more in line with other local authorities, it was proposed that the permit charge be maintained at £52.20 but change the frequency of collections to a fortnightly service. This change was anticipated to reduce costs by £356,000.

In discussion, members did not welcome the proposed change, however, it was expressed that such changes would be necessary to meet ongoing savings targets. While there was a proposal that collection could be moved to a seasonal collection, with no collections during winter months, it was indicated that this had been investigated and would not provide the saving outlined in the report. There were also concerns raised around timing as it was not yet clear what budget settlements would look like, while it was conceded that it was unlikely the budget would see an increase sufficient to eliminate the need for this saving.

Following the discussion, Councillor O'Donnell, seconded by Councillor Anderson moved in terms of the recommendations in the report.

Councillor Buchanan, seconded by Councillor Macdonald, moved as an amendment that the paper be noted and the communications strategy continue, with a final decision on the proposal deferred until budget information was available.

On the roll being called, Councillors Anderson, Campbell, Cunningham, Edlin, McLean, Morrison, O'Donnell, Pragnell, Wallace and Provost Montague voted for the motion and Councillors Bamforth, Buchanan, Convery, Ireland, Lunday, and Macdonald voted for the amendment.

There being 10 votes for the motion and 6 votes for the amendment, the motion was declared carried and the Council:-

The Council:-

- (a) noted the information provided as background on the costs and usage of the current brown bin (garden and food waste) collection scheme; and
- (b) approved the change of frequency of brown bin collections to a fortnightly service, while maintaining the current cost of the garden waste permit scheme within this.

CHANGES TO ORGANISATIONAL REMITS – ENVIRONMENT

1013. The Council considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships seeking approval for a change to the Head of Service remits within the Environment Department.

The current structure of three Heads of Service in Environment was detailed in Appendix 1a to the report. Following review, it was determined that, in order to better reflect local and national priorities, there was a need to consider how to maximise the capacity of the Environment Department to continue to meet the challenges associated with the Council's strategic vision.

The changed structure, which were also included as an appendix to the report, and were summarised within the report, would continue to meet the Department's priorities within the context of changes in each distinct area of work.

The Council:-

- (a) approved the changes to the Head of Service remits within the management structure in the Environment Department; and
- (b) delegated to the Head of HR and Corporate Services, in consultation with the Director of Environment, to make the necessary arrangements.

ARMED FORCES COVENANT AND SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES

1014. The Council considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships on the engagement and work being carried out in support of the Armed Forces Covenant to support serving personnel, regulars and reserve, veterans, their partners and dependent children in East Renfrewshire. The report also provided an update on the Council's work toward gaining Gold accreditation from the Ministry of Defence's Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERC).

The report was presented by Councillor Campbell, as Armed Forces Champion for East Renfrewshire, who highlighted the work ongoing in East Renfrewshire to secure funding through charity bids and ensuring signposting of resources to all requiring support.

In particular, Councillor Campbell highlighted the Health for Heroes programme, which offered free gym and fitness centre memberships and was the first of its kind in the UK. She also highlighted the quarterly Veteran's Breakfast Club, which had a positive effect on the mental and physical health of veterans in their return to civilian life.

Councillor Campbell also pointed out that many aspects of the Gold accreditation from the Ministry of Defence ERC were already recognised within the Council.

The Council:-

- (a) noted the progress that had been made by the Council, Health and Social Care Partnership and East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure Trust in supporting the armed forces community and implementing the Armed Forces Covenant duties;
- (b) noted the work of the Veterans Support Officer in supporting service personnel and all the activities in the area; and
- (c) recognised the work to pursue the Ministry of Defence's Defence Employer Recognition Scheme Gold recognition award.

MINUTE
of
CABINET

Minute of meeting held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 24 October 2024.

Present:

Councillor Owen O'Donnell (Leader) Councillor Danny Devlin (*)
Councillor Andrew Anderson (Vice Chair) Councillor Katie Pragnell

Councillor O'Donnell, Leader, in the Chair

Attending:

Steven Quinn, Chief Executive; Caitriona McAuley, Director of Environment; Mark Rodgers, Head of Housing and Property; Kirsty Stanners, Head of Finance; Suzanne Conlin, Senior Housing Manager; and John Burke, Democratic Services Officer.

(*) indicates remote attendance

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1015. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

STRATEGIC HOUSING INVESTMENT PLAN 2025-2030

1016. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment seeking approval for the proposed Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2025/26 to 2029/30 (SHIP) and for its submission to the Scottish Government.

The Scottish Government required local authorities to supplement their Local Housing Strategy (LHS) with a SHIP, setting out in detail the Council's affordable housing investment priorities and detailed programme for delivering this with their partners over a period of 5 years, in line with national guidance.

The SHIP was refreshed annually to reflect progress of projects and to ensure an effective operational plan for the delivery of the Council's strategic housing priorities. The full document was attached as appendix 1 to the report, and the report summarised the resource assumptions and highlights of the proposed programme for 2025-2030.

Members raised questions regarding specific projects included in the proposals, as well as the impact of possible budgetary changes.

Following a brief discussion, the Cabinet:-

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- (a) noted the East Renfrewshire Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2025-2030 for submission to Scottish Government by 25th October 2024 (Appendix 1); and
- (b) noted the significant pressure for additional affordable housing to meet the needs of residents, and the contribution that the SHIP programme made in addressing this.

HOUSING SERVICES ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2023/24 AND ASSURANCE STATEMENT (SCOTTISH SOCIAL HOUSING CHARTER)

1017. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment seeking approval for the Annual Assurance Statement (AAS) 2024 and noting of the Performance Report for Housing Services (PRHS).

Those documents provided Information on the Council's compliance with the Scottish Housing Regulator's Regulatory Framework, Scottish Social Housing Charter (SSHC) standards and its statutory obligations, it was a submission required by all Registered Social Landlords.

The report provided information on the 37 performance and 32 contextual indicators by which performance was measured, known as the Annual Return on the Charter. A self-assessment had been undertaken offering assurance of a good level of compliance with the Framework.

An Action Plan, attached as Appendix 2 to the report, had been developed to further strengthen compliance against the Framework and attend to any areas for improvement, which were highlighted within the report, particularly within the areas of Electrical Installation Condition Report Renewals; Rent Arrears; and Homeless Services.

The Council's performance report against the SSHC was attached as Appendix 1 to the report, with the AAS attached as Appendix 3.

There followed a discussion where members discussed rent levels, improvements in emergency repairs, and work being undertaken alongside the Council's Money Advice and Rights Team to assist the Council's tenants.

The Cabinet:-

- (a) noted the Council's performance for 2023/24 against Scottish Social Housing Charter (SSHC) indicators and measures and comparisons to the previous year and wider housing sector, detailed in Appendix 1 to the report;
- (b) noted the Action Plan to continue to strengthen the Council's compliance against the Regulatory Framework and SSHC attached as Appendix 2 to the report; and
- (c) approved the 2024 Annual Assurance Statement of compliance with the Regulatory Framework and SSHC standards and its submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator by 31 October 2024, attached as Appendix 3 to the report.

CHAIR

MINUTE
of
APPEALS COMMITTEE

Minute of meeting held at 9.30am in the Committee Room, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 29 October 2024.

Present:

Councillor Caroline Bamforth
Councillor Kate Campbell

Councillor Andrew Morrison

Councillor Bamforth in the Chair

Attending:

Kath McCormack, HR Manager; Gerry Mahon, Chief Officer – Legal and Procurement.

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

The Committee agreed that Councillor Bamforth would chair the meeting.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1018. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

Resolution to Exclude Press and Public

At this point in the meeting, on the motion of the Chair, the committee unanimously resolved that in accordance with the provisions of Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following Items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Act.

APPEAL AGAINST DISMISSAL – EDU – 05/2024

1019. Joe McCaig, Head of Education Services (Performance and Provision) and Jacqueline Hart, HR Case Team Leader appeared on behalf of management.

The appellant and a representative appeared in connection with the appeal.

Both parties made their submissions to the committee and were heard in answer to questions on their submissions.

Thereafter both parties withdrew from the meeting.

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Following consideration, both parties were recalled and advised by the Chair that the grounds of the appeal had not been substantiated and the appeal was not upheld.

CHAIR

MINUTE
of
APPEALS COMMITTEE

Minute of meeting held at 1.30pm in the Committee Room, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 29 October 2024.

Present:

Councillor Caroline Bamforth
Councillor Kate Campbell

Councillor Andrew Morrison

Councillor Morrison in the Chair

Attending:

Kath McCormack, HR Manager; Nicola McEleny, Solicitor.

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

The Committee agreed that Councillor Morrison would chair the meeting.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1020. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

Resolution to Exclude Press and Public

At this point in the meeting, on the motion of the Chair, the committee unanimously resolved that in accordance with the provisions of Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Act.

APPEAL AGAINST REFUSAL OF A REQUEST FOR FLEXIBLE WORKING – HSCP – 06/2024

1021. Lee McLaughlin, Head of Adult Services, Communities and Wellbeing and Sharon Bradshaw, HR Case Advisor appeared on behalf of management.

The appellant and a representative appeared in connection with the appeal.

Both parties made their submissions to the committee and were heard in answer to questions on their submissions.

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Thereafter both parties withdrew from the meeting.

Following consideration, both parties were recalled and advised by the Chair that the grounds of the appeal had not been substantiated and the appeal was not upheld.

CHAIR

MINUTE
of
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Minute of meeting held at 2.00pm in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 31st October 2024.

Present:

Councillor Jim McLean (Chair)
Councillor Paul Edlin
Councillor Annette Ireland

Councillor Chris Lunday
(*)Provost Mary Montague (*)
Councillor Andrew Morrison

Councillor McLean in the Chair

(*) indicates remote attendance

Attending:

Derek Scott, Principal Planner (Development Management); Margaret McGleish, Planner; John Burke, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies:

Councillors Betty Cunningham.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1022. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

CHAIR'S REMARKS

The Chair intimated that, as only certain members had been present for the site visit relating to the first application, he would consider the applications within item 3 in the order shown below. This would allow those members who had not attended to leave the meeting prior to its consideration.

APPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

1023. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Environment on applications for planning permission requiring consideration by the Committee.

It was agreed that the applications be determined as indicated at Appendix 1 accompanying this Minute, particular reference being made to the following:-

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- (ii) 2024/0168/TP – Construction and Operation of a 40 MW Battery Energy Storage Facility together with Associated Infrastructure, Substation, Security Fencing, CCTV, Security Lighting and Landscaping.

The Principal Planner was heard further on the report, in the course of which he summarised the 251 representations that had been received.

He provided further information on the relevant planning policies and assessments and stated that the proposal was considered to generally comply with the terms of the development plan, including NPF4 and LDP2.

There was discussion among members around fire risk, the reasons for the selection of the specific site, the potential uses of the proposed community fund, car parking at the site during and after construction, and the contribution the proposed development would make to renewable energy infrastructure.

Provost Montague, seconded by Councillor Ireland, moved that a site visit be arranged to allow members to view the site.

Councillor McLean, seconded by Councillor Morrison, moved as an amendment that no site visit be carried out and the members proceed to consider the application at this meeting.

On a vote being taken by role call, Councillors Ireland, Lunday and Provost Montague voted for the motion, Councillors Edlin, McLean and Morrison voted for the amendment.

With a tied vote, the Chair exercised his casting vote for the amendment, which was declared carried and the Committee proceeded to consideration of the application.

Councillor Morrison, seconded by Councillor McLean moved that the Committee refuse planning permission as the application was contrary to NPF4 Policies 8 and 23, and LDP2 Policy D3.

Councillor Ireland, seconded by Provost Montague, moved as an amendment that the recommendation of the report be accepted and planning permission granted subject to the conditions set out in the report of handling.

On a vote being taken by role call, Councillor Ireland and Provost Montague voted for the amendment, Councillors Edlin, Lunday, McLean and Morrison voted for the motion, which was declared carried.

Therefore, the Committee agreed to refuse planning permission as the application was considered contrary to policies 8 and 23 of National Planning Framework 4 and policy D3 of Local Development Plan 2.

Councillor Ireland left the meeting following consideration of this application.

- (iii) 2024/0372/TP – Installation of Treehouse in Rear Garden (Retrospective with Amendments).

The Principal Planner was heard further on the report, in the course of which he summarised the 10 representations that had been received.

He provided further information on the relevant planning policies and assessments and stated that the proposal was considered to generally comply with the terms of National Planning

Framework 4 and the adopted East Renfrewshire Local Development Plan 2 for the reasons set out in the report.

In discussion, members were given further information about the screening that would be erected around the treehouse to prevent overlooking of neighbouring properties and the conditions indicating that this screening would be replaced should it be damaged.

Thereafter, the Committee agreed to grant planning permission for the reasons set out in the report of handling.

Councillor McLean and Councillor Lunday left the meeting following consideration of this application.

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

1024. The Committee agreed that Councillor Morrison assume the role of Chair for the consideration of the final application by unanimous agreement.

Councillor Morrison in the Chair

- (i) 2024/0118/TP – Single Storey Front, Side and Rear Extension, including Boundary Wall and Elevated Decking.

The Chair indicated that those members who had been present at the site visit had also heard the full explanation from the Principal Planner at the previous meeting and there was no need to repeat that presentation, this was agreed by the other members present.

Thereafter, the Committee agreed to grant planning permission for the reasons set out in the report of handling.

CHAIR

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997
AS AMENDED BY THE PLANNING ETC (SCOTLAND) ACT 2006
PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997**

Draft index of applications under the above acts to be considered by Planning Applications Committee
on 31st October 2024.

Reference No: 2024/0118/TP

Ward: 4

Applicant:

Mr Mark Young
34 Strathview Park
Netherlee
Glasgow
Scotland
G44 3EN

Agent:

Barry Coogan
10 William Ure Place
Bishopbriggs
Glasgow
Scotland
G64 3BH

Site: 34 Strathview Park, Netherlee, East Renfrewshire, G44 3EN

Description: Single storey front, side and rear extension, including boundary wall and elevated decking.

Please click [here](#) for further information on this application

Reference No: 2024/0168/TP

Ward: 5

Applicant:

GPC 1137 Ltd
3rd Floor
1 Ashley Road
Altrincham
Cheshire
WA14 2DT

Agent:

Paul Booth
1 Bar Lane
York
YO1 6JU

Site: Land at the East Side of Glasgow Road, Eaglesham, G76 0DN

Description: Construction and operation of a 40MW battery energy storage facility together with associated infrastructure, substation, security fencing, CCTV, security lighting and landscaping..

Please click [here](#) for further information on this application

Reference No: 2024/0372/TP

Ward: 4

Applicant:

Mr Michael Cairns
644 Clarkston Road
Glasgow
G44 3YS

Agent:

Site: 644 Clarkston Road, Netherlee, East Renfrewshire, G44 3YS

Description: Installation of treehouse in rear garden (retrospective with amendments)

Please click [here](#) for further information on this application

MINUTE
of
APPEALS COMMITTEE

Minute of meeting held at 9.30am in the Committee Room, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 6 November 2024.

Present:

Provost Mary Montague
Councillor Kate Campbell

Councillor Andrew Morrison

Councillor Morrison in the Chair

Attending:

Geri Taylor, HR Business Partner; Rebecca Auld, Solicitor.

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

The Committee agreed that Councillor Morrison would chair the meeting.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1025. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

Resolution to Exclude Press and Public

At this point in the meeting, on the motion of the Chair, the committee unanimously resolved that in accordance with the provisions of Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following Items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Act.

APPEAL AGAINST DISMISSAL – EDU – 07/2024

1026. Joe McCaig, Head of Education Services (Performance and Provision) and Jacqueline Hart, HR Case Team Leader appeared on behalf of management.

The appellant and a representative appeared in connection with the appeal.

Both parties made their submissions to the committee and were heard in answer to questions on their submissions.

Thereafter both parties withdrew from the meeting.

1004

Following consideration, both parties were recalled and advised by the Chair that the grounds of the appeal had not been substantiated and the appeal was not upheld.

CHAIR

MINUTE
of
APPEALS COMMITTEE

Minute of meeting held at 1.30pm in the Committee Room, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 6 November 2024.

Present:

Councillor Andrew Anderson (Chair)
Councillor Kate Campbell

Councillor Andrew Morrison

Councillor Anderson in the Chair

Attending:

Geri Taylor, HR Business Partner; Gerry Mahon, Chief Officer – Legal and Procurement.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1027. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

Resolution to Exclude Press and Public

At this point in the meeting, on the motion of the Chair, the committee unanimously resolved that in accordance with the provisions of Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Act.

APPEAL AGAINST DISMISSAL – HSCP – 04/2024

1028. Gayle Smart, Senior Manager - Unscheduled Care & Intensive Services and Louise Brown, HR Business Partner appeared on behalf of management.

The appellant had communicated to the Clerk that they would not be appearing at the meeting and wished for their submission to be considered in-absentia.

Members considered both parties' submissions and management's representatives were heard in answer to questions on their submissions.

Thereafter both parties withdrew from the meeting.

1006

Following consideration, both parties were recalled and advised by the Chair that the grounds of the appeal had not been substantiated and the appeal was not upheld.

CHAIR

MINUTE
of
CABINET

Minute of meeting held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 7 November 2024.

Present:

Councillor Owen O'Donnell (Leader) Councillor Danny Devlin (*)
Councillor Andrew Anderson (Vice Chair) Councillor Katie Pragnell

Councillor O'Donnell, Leader, in the Chair

Attending:

Steven Quinn, Chief Executive; Caitriona McAuley, Director of Environment; Siobhan McColgan, Head of Education Services (Equality and Equity)(*); Mark Rodgers, Head of Housing and Property; Kirsty Stanners, Head of Finance; Michaela Sullivan, Head of Place; Paul Parsons, Principal Accountant; and John Burke, Democratic Services Officer.

(*) indicates remote attendance

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1029. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

ESTIMATED REVENUE BUDGET OUTTURN 2024/2025

1030. The Cabinet considered a report by the Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer) detailing the estimated projected revenue budget out-turn for 2024/25 and providing details of the expected year-end variances together with summary cost information for each of the undernoted services as at 31 August 2024 and subsequent assessment of pressures arising.

- (i) Education Department;
- (ii) Contribution to Integration Joint Board;
- (iii) Environment Department;
- (iv) Environment Department – Support;
- (v) Chief Executive's Office;
- (vi) Chief Executive's Office – Support;
- (vii) Business Operations and Partnerships Department;
- (viii) Business Operations and Partnerships Department – Support;
- (ix) Other Expenditure and Income;
- (x) Joint Boards;
- (xi) Corporate Contingency;
- (xii) Health and Social Care Partnership; and
- (xiii) Housing Revenue Account.

1008

The Principal Accountant advised that on the basis of the information, and taking account of forecast Council Tax collection, a year end operational underspend of £768k was forecast on General Fund services with an operational overspend of £160k on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The reasons for departmental variances were set out in the report. She outlined that any such operational underspend at this year-end would assist the Council in meeting future years' budget challenges.

It was noted that the above figures reflected that £1,351k of forecast COVID-related pressures would be covered by drawing on the Council's COVID grant resources and as a result did not impact on the operational budget position.

It was noted that the forecast outturn position could still be subject to significant change, for example if COVID pressures increased again. Conversely, it was hoped that management action to avoid any non-essential expenditure could increase the underspend at year end.

In addition, the report sought approval for a number of service virements and operational budget adjustments, details of which were outlined.

Following a brief discussion, where the reduction in costs for PFI/PPI and the overspend in Community Safety were discussed, the Cabinet agreed:-

- (a) to note the forecast underlying General Fund Operational underspend of £768k and the HRA operational overspend of £160k before any contribution from the HRA reserve; and
- (b) to note the continued financial pressures on operational services arising from the COVID-19 pandemic and that it was expected to cover those from the COVID grant reserve; and

CHARGING FOR SERVICES – ISOBEL MAIR OUT OF SCHOOL CARE (OSC)

1031. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Education setting out a proposed approach to developing an Out of School Care (OSC) provision in Isobel Mair School.

The Council had committed £60,000 to support families of children who attended Isobel Mair School, Carlibar Communication Centre and Williamwood Communication and Support Service out with school times through the participatory budgeting approach. To that end, the Specialist Provision Out of School Care and Holiday Support Short Life Working Group had been established to explore opportunities for engaging with external providers to develop an OSC and holiday provision for children with complex additional support needs.

The report outlined the details of a consultation that had taken place with parents/carers from all relevant services, explaining that they had agreed that an OSC service should be based in Isobel Mair School and accessible for all specialist provision pupils.

External operators had been contacted, and the report outlined detailed discussions that had taken place with Indigo Childcare, with the conclusion that they were unable to provide the required service. Thereafter, a feasibility exercise had been carried out to the possibility of the Council providing its own service. The full findings of the scoping exercise were provided in the report.

Members thanked the Education Department for their work in developing the proposed approach.

The Cabinet:-

- (a) noted the actions taken to date in trying to source an external OSC provision;
- (b) agreed to the establishment of an East Renfrewshire Council run Term Time Additional Support Needs After School Care in Isobel Mair School;
- (c) agreed to the charge of £22.50 per session for 2024/2025 to access this term-time OSC; and
- (d) agreed to review charges for this service as part of the annual Charging for Service exercise.

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT – 30 YEAR BUSINESS PLAN

1032. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment on the 2024/25 review of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) business plan and the implications for service delivery and investment.

The Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 required local authorities to prepare a HRA, separate from the General Fund of East Renfrewshire Council, which was self-financing and balanced each year. The HRA was responsible for all social housing owned by the Council, including sheltered housing, lock-ups and garage sites, as well as related open spaces, roads and footpaths which were not adopted by the Roads Service. The HRA also included a number of commercial buildings and shops. The Council was expected to prepare a 30 year business plan to address all of those areas.

In addition to key income and expenditure needs, the business plan would ensure that the Council met its statutory obligations as a social landlord, and some of those were outlined in the report.

The content of the 30 year business plan was summarised in the report and a 10 year capital plan would be submitted to the Council each February.

Following discussion, in which members received clarification on points around the commercial buildings held within the HRA, the Cabinet:-

- (a) noted the current financial status of the HRA and key activity areas for focus in 2024/25 and 2025/26;
- (b) noted the assumptions made for future years around rent increases and the HRA debt affordability ratio;
- (c) noted future investment pressures and the impact of the 30 year business plan; and
- (d) noted the annual submission of a detailed 10 year capital programme to the Council.

HOUSING ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN 2024-2026

1033. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment seeking approval for the updated Housing Asset Management Plan 2024-2026

1010

The Council's Housing Asset Management Plan (HAMP) had been updated to fit into the hierarchy of the Corporate Asset Management Plan, and outlined the work being undertaken by the Council in relation to management of its housing stock and the Housing Revenue Account's assets..

The updated HAMP was attached as Appendix 1 to the report and its high level vision, key challenges and approach to management of housing stock were summarised in the report.

In discussion, members asked questions about the sorts of assets that were within the HAMP and within the wider Council accounts, and the age of housing stock and the associated challenges. There was also a point raised around organisational challenges with the commercial properties held within the HRA.

Thereafter, the Cabinet approved the Housing Asset Management Plan 2024-2026.

CHILD POVERTY PRACTICE ACCELERATOR FUND 2024-2026

1034. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment informing members of the award of Child Poverty Practice Accelerator Fund (CPAF) funding from the Scottish Government for the delivery of employability in 2024-2026.

CPAF was launched by the Scottish Government in July 2023, aiming to provide support to enhance an area's approach to tackling child poverty. CPAF was a competitive scheme that local authorities could submit bids to.

The Council had submitted a successful bid to CPAF in July 2024, relating to the Flexible for Families Employer Programme. It had been developed in partnership with Flexibility Works, who would undertake the day-to-day delivery of the project. They were a social enterprise who specialised in encouraging flexible and new ways of working in Scotland.

The project would provide support for up to 30 local employers, including support assessments, mentorships and other actions as appropriate, supporting up to 15 families. The expected outcomes were summarised in the report.

Members welcomed the funding and were given some clarity on the specific work that would be undertaken.

Thereafter, the Cabinet noted the content of the report and the grant award from the Scottish Government and approved the use of the award for the Flexible for Families Employer Programme as outlined in the report.

CHAIR

MINUTE
of
EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Minute of meeting, held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on Thursday 14 November 2024.

Present:

Councillor Tony Buchanan
Councillor Kate Campbell
Councillor Owen O'Donnell (Leader)
Councillor Katie Pragnell (Vice Chair)
Councillor Colm Merrick

Councillor Gordon Wallace
Ms Fiona Gilchrist
Ms Dorothy Graham
Mr Des Morris
Ms Evelyn Yedd*

Councillor Pragnell in the Chair

(*) indicates remote attendance

Attending:

Mark Ratter, Director of Education; Janice Collins, Head of Education Services (Quality Improvement and Performance); Joe McCaig, Head of Education Services (Provision); Siobhan McColgan, Head of Education Services (Equality and Equity); Graeme Hay, Education Senior Manager (Leading Change); Tracy Morton, Education Senior Manager (Developing People); and Jennifer Graham, Democratic Services Officer.

Also Attending:

Maria McBride, Head Teacher, St. Cadoc's Primary School; and Nicola MacGlashan, Head Teacher and Ross McLeish, Depute Head Teacher, Williamwood High School.

Apologies:

Councillors Andrew Anderson (Chair) and Danny Devlin.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1035. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT ON ST. CADOC'S PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY CLASS

1036. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Education informing members of the report produced by Education Scotland following its inspection of St. Cadoc's Primary School and Nursery Class. A copy of the inspection report accompanied the report.

The inspection had been carried out in August 2024 and Education Scotland had evaluated two quality indicators in both the school and nursery, and provided a short report which detailed the strengths and areas for improvement.

The Head of Education Services (Quality Improvement and Performance) provided further information in relation to the inspection process, stating that Education Scotland had found both aspects of the work in the school to be very good: learning, teaching and assessment; and raising attainment and achievement. Education Scotland found both aspects of the work in the nursery class to be good: learning, teaching and assessment; and securing children's progress.

The report especially highlighted 2 areas of best practice being demonstrated at St. Cadoc's Primary and identified them as worth sharing more widely on a national platform; staff had successfully embedded play in the early years of the school; and teachers' skilled use of well-considered and appropriate questioning during learning.

The committee heard from Maria McBride, Head Teacher, who advised that this had been a journey of continuous self-improvement and a commitment to strive for the best experience for every pupil. She added that the school had set ambitious goals to meet the high standards the children deserved and found it satisfying that everyone's efforts had been recognised in the report. The report also recognised that the learning experience was based on a very strong ethos underpinned by the gospel values and highlighted major strengths which were worth sharing with other educational establishments, which was a source of pride for all involved. She thanked the Director of Education and Leadership Team for their unwavering support, guidance and encouragement which had assisted the school in their journey by helping them to grow, reflect and improve, and also thanked the Education Committee for their continued support by advocating for high standards of education in East Renfrewshire. She reflected that the report had been achieved through the efforts of the whole staff team who had been fundamental in driving success by providing high quality teaching and innovative practices. She added that there was a strong sense of community in the school and the children were supported both in and out of the classroom. However, she added that a large part of the school's success was as a result of the enthusiasm of the children themselves who were at the heart of St. Cadoc's Primary School and she expressed her pride in every pupil.

Members of the Committee expressed their congratulations on an excellent report and gave high praise to the staff in relation to their dedication on creating a great learning experience within St. Cadoc's Primary School.

Having heard members commend the report, the Committee agreed:-

- (a) to note the content of the Education Scotland report on St. Cadoc's Primary School; and
- (b) to approve the action plan to address the agreed areas for improvement.

RESULTS OF THE CONSULTATION ON THE PROVISION OF EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE AND OUT OF SCHOOL CARE SERVICES

1037. The committee considered a report by the Director of Education providing an update on the results of the biennial consultation on the provision of both early learning and childcare (ELC) and out of school care (OSC) services across East Renfrewshire.

The report explained that the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 sets out a requirement for local authorities to consult with families on the provision of ELC and OSC every 2 years and to outline plans for service delivery. The most recent consultation took place during September/October 2024 and there was an increase in responses when compared to the previous exercise in 2022.

A summary of responses was provided which showed a positive picture with a strong average score across communities in East Renfrewshire, as a result of more flexible options which had been introduced and had proven to be very popular. It was highlighted that the Education Department continued to engage with families to ensure continued adherence to the key principles of quality, flexibility, accessibility and affordability and to remain responsive to the need of families in the provision of early learning and childcare. In addition, the department continued to recognise the importance of out of school care services for families to support employment, training and wider family commitments and would continue to engage with partners national around any wider Scottish Government commitments.

In response to questions, the Education Senior Manager (Leading Change) confirmed that a number of factors could lead to a lower score including, families not receiving their first choice preference and families expressing a preference for models which were not available. He advised that although a greater degree of flexibility had been introduced, not every demand could be met and some families would remain displeased with the choice provided. The Head of Education Services (Equality and Equity) confirmed that establishment of a directory for out of school provision had been created for parents of children with Additional Support Needs. This directory includes mainstream provisions. The ASN subgroup of the children's services partnership will ensure this directory is accessible to all parents/carers.

Having heard Councillor Pragnell highlight that some out of school clubs were conducted by teachers/staff in their own time, which was a very valuable resource for pupils, parents and carers, the Education Committee noted the results of the consultation on both early learning and childcare, and out of school care services.

PERFORMANCE OF EAST RENFREWSHIRE SCHOOLS IN THE BROAD GENERAL EDUCATION AND SENIOR PHASE

1038. Councillor Pragnell invited the Head of Education Services (Quality Improvement and Performance) to give a presentation on the performance of East Renfrewshire Schools in the broad general education and senior phase. It was reported that the information presented would include information from primary establishments, S1-S3 secondary data, as well as senior phase data relating to SQA awards.

The Head of Education Services (Quality Improvement and Performance) advised that the format of the report had changed this session and would follow the key themes of attainment, inclusion, participation, engagement and attendance, as set out in the Scottish Attainment Challenge. Referring to attainment in the broad general education, she reported that there had been improvements in reading, writing, talking & listening, and mathematics attainment throughout the years of the Broad General Education when compared to 2022-23. There had

been an increase in performance from the previous year in all areas with 93% of Primary 1, 4 and 7 pupils achieving expected levels or better for reading, 91% for writing, 95% in talking and listening, and 92% in maths. All of these figures were also well above the national average. Referring to the council's stretch aims, she reported that although the stretch aim had been missed in some areas, including literacy, there was still time to achieve this as the targets had been identified for the period 2023-26. She added that, although the overall stretch aims for literacy and numeracy had been narrowly missed, the targets for Quintiles 1 and 5 had been met and the gender gap had reduced for numeracy. Although significant improvements had been recorded for pupils impacted by poverty, she acknowledged that there was still a long way to go to improve these targets further and reduce the poverty gap. In terms of the broad general education in secondary schools, young people were well on target to achieve the stretch aims set and figures remained higher than the national average across reading, writing and numeracy. She added that positive results across the broad general education had been achieved through the development of a shared understanding of standards and expectation in all educational establishments and through use of the Strategic Equity Fund to allow schools to provide targeted provision in their community.

Thereafter, further detail was provided on improvements in the senior phase, highlighting that 2024 saw the return to examination procedures last used in 2019, where exams ran with no adaptations. Focussing on the S4 cohort, she reported that positive progress had been made since 2019, despite the impacts of Covid, and the quality of awards had not been diminished. When comparing awards of 5 or more at SQA level 5 or better, all schools in East Renfrewshire had outperformed their virtual comparator. Excellent results had been achieved for awards of 5 or more at SQA level 6 or better for S5 pupils and all schools at this level had performed higher than the national average and outperformed the virtual comparator. Referring to pupils in S6 achieving 1 or more awards at SQA level 7, the virtual comparator was outperformed for all schools and more pupils stayed on for 6th year on 2023-24.

Further information was provided on the use of Insight tariff points which could assist with identifying gaps between different groups of pupils. Insight point information was provided by SIMD for the most deprived 30%, middle 40% and least deprived 30% of pupils, which showed that young people from decile 1 in East Renfrewshire were outperforming pupils from higher deciles living in other areas of Scotland. Leaver attainment information across literacy and numeracy was provided since 2020, showing that literacy and numeracy at levels 4, 5 and 6 had generally stayed the same or had slightly increased but stayed well above the national average.

The Head of Education (Quality Improvement and Performance) went on to provide information on Inclusion, advising that this was measured in a number of different way for example through questionnaires, inspection reports (both internal and external), and standards and quality reports. As part of that process, schools constantly demonstrated that they were very good or excellent at ensuring that young people were included. She added that 98.7% of school leavers went on to a positive destination which was the best ever in East Renfrewshire but also the best in Scotland.

Case studies were highlighted, including on work being undertaken at Isobel Mair School in relation to developing the young workforce by promoting STEM and World of Work through a play-based curriculum to encourage pupils to build resistance and become problem solvers and lifelong learners; and parental engagement work being carried out at St. Luke's High School to encourage families to discuss learning, share how their child learned and fostering engagement and enjoyment in learning together.

Further information was provided on pupil attendance which remained an area of concern both in East Renfrewshire and nationally. Although East Renfrewshire's attendance rates

remained higher than many other authorities, they were not yet back to pre-pandemic levels and more work was required to reduce absence rates. It was reported that schools and staff continued to make a tremendous effort to encourage pupils to attend school regularly and further information was provided on work being carried out at Busby Primary School which highlighted to parents the impact of poor attendance on their child's education, amongst other things.

In conclusion, the Head of Education Services (Quality Improvement and Performance) highlighted the main points from the presentation including closing the poverty related gap; resilience of S4 pupils who had been significantly affected by the pandemic; 2024 senior phase results which included the best ever results in S5; outstanding school leaver destination achievement; and external validation from Education Scotland.

In response to questions, the Head of Education Services (Quality Improvement and Performance) reported that, although some of the performance figures for St. Luke's High School were lower than those in other schools and when compared to previous years, the school was still more than meeting the needs of young people when compared to the virtual comparator and national figures. The Director of Education added that young people living in poverty had been disproportionately affected by the impact of Covid and interventions had been put in place to target this group. He added that the performance figures could have been lower if those interventions had not been put in place. The Head of Education Services (Quality Improvement and Performance) advised that further information on longer term leaver destinations were captured in annual participation figures with colleagues from Work East Ren and further information could be shared with the committee in due course. She added that data from the presentation would be included in each establishment's Standards and Quality report and would also be included in the departmental Standards and Quality report which would be submitted to the committee in early 2025.

Members commended the work of pupils, teachers and staff in producing such excellent results. Thereafter, having heard Councillor Pragnell propose that a letter be sent by the Chair, Vice Chair and Director of Education, on behalf of the committee, to educational establishments thanking them for their hard work, the committee agreed:-

- (a) that a letter be sent by the Chair, Vice Chair and Director of Education, on behalf of the committee, to educational establishments thanking them for their hard work in producing another set of excellent performance results; and
- (b) otherwise, to note the presentation and associated comments made.

SPOTLIGHT ON RAISING ATTAINMENT IN WILLIAMWOOD HIGH SCHOOL

1039. Councillor Pragnell invited Nicola MacGlashan and Ross McLeish to give a spotlight presentation on raising attainment in Williamwood High School.

Ms MacGlashan advised that Williamwood High School's aim was to get it right for all learners with no one left behind and no stone left unturned. She advised that, although Williamwood was recognised as a high performing school, 30% of pupils had Additional Support Needs and many pupils were affected by hidden poverty as living in East Renfrewshire could be very expensive. She added that this had been a collective journey for the school over the last 3 years, with everyone working as a team around each young person, including input from teaching and non-teaching staff, parents and carers. Capacity had been built in staff by

working together and reaching out to colleagues in secondary schools in East Renfrewshire and across Scotland.

Mr McLeish added that the school wanted to ensure that all young people had excellent experiences and a number of curricular changes had been introduced, made possible by working with all of the secondary school in East Renfrewshire. A new qualification in sports development had been introduced, strengthening the partnership between the school and cluster primaries, and additional partnership working had also been introduced with organisations such as the Forrest School; Tigers Construction; Rangers Charity Foundation; and Glasgow Science Centre, amongst others.

Ms MacGlashan added, , she was very proud that staff worked in partnership across East Renfrewshire and beyond to provide additional experiences for young people, particularly for those who require additional support which may differ from what people may view as traditional school activities. She provided further information on the experiences of 3 young people who had experienced challenges with their mental health and, following interventions which included reaching out to partners, was pleased to report that 2 had since moved on to college courses which they were thriving at, and the other was now undertaking an Advanced Higher course. She referred to other innovations which had been introduced, including a breakfast club and various after school clubs, and reported that more boys were now attending the school library to study as food was being provided at that location. She concluded by highlighting that the landscape in one of the top performing schools in Scotland had changed to make sure that every child matters and every child achieves.

Having heard members thank Ms MacGlashan and Mr McLeish for their informative spotlight presentation, the committee noted the presentation.

CHAIR

MINUTE
of
CABINET

Minute of meeting held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 21 November 2024.

Present:

Councillor Owen O'Donnell (Leader) Councillor Katie Pragnell
Councillor Andrew Anderson (Vice Chair)

Councillor O'Donnell, Leader, in the Chair

Attending:

Steven Quinn, Chief Executive; Caitriona McAuley, Director of Environment; Kirsty Stanners, Head of Finance; Anthony Jenkins, Resilience Officer; Paul Parsons, Principal Accountant; and John Burke, Democratic Services Officer.

(*) indicates remote attendance

Apology:

Councillor Danny Devlin

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1040. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME

1041 The Cabinet considered a report by the Head of Finance to monitor both income and expenditure as at 30 September 2024 against the approved General Fund Capital Programme and recommending adjustments where possible.

The report updated project costs and phasings based on current progress and anticipated progress to 31 March 2025.

The Principal Accountant outlined that the current position was a budget shortfall of £0.053m, which was within manageable limits.

The main income and expenditure movements to September 2024 were detailed in the report.

Following a brief discussion, the Cabinet agreed to recommend that Council:-

- (a) note and approve the movements within the 2024/25 programme;

1018

- (b) note the shortfall of £0.053m and that income and expenditure on the programme would be managed and reported on a regular basis.

HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME

1042. The Cabinet considered a report by the Head of Finance to monitor both income and expenditure as at 30 September 2024 against the approved Housing Capital Programme and recommending adjustments where required.

The report updated project costs and phasings based on current progress and anticipated progress to 31 March 2025.

The Principal Accountant outlined that the current position was a budget shortfall of £0.101m, which was within manageable limits.

The main income and expenditure movements to September 2024 were detailed in the report.

Following a discussion, the Cabinet recommended that Council:-

- (a) note and approve the movements within the programme; and
- (b) note the shortfall of £0.121m and that income and expenditure on the programme would be managed and reported on a regular basis.
- (c) Cabinet also asked that an update on IT project management in the Council be provided to Councillor Anderson.

ANNUAL STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER OVERVIEW

1043 The Cabinet considered a report by the Chief Executive on the annual update of the Council's Strategic Risk Register and a summary of risk management progress. The previous update had been considered by Cabinet on 7 September 2023 (Page 611, Item 558 refers), and by the Audit and Scrutiny Committee on 28 March 2024 (Page 808, Item 797 refers) and on 26 September 2024 (Page 955, Item 966 refers).

The Strategic Risk register, attached as Appendix 1 to the report, set out the key strategic risks to be considered by East Renfrewshire Council and detailed the actions that management had put in place to manage those risks.

Speaking to the report, the Resilience Officer summarised the number of risks and their severity, as well as highlighting where risks had been added or removed from the register, or amended in their wording.

The Cabinet was reminded that the Strategic Risk Register was reported every 6 months to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee and annually to the Cabinet. The Corporate Management Team (CMT) continued to discuss and review the Register on a regular basis.

In discussing the report, members highlighted some risks where they queried the level of risk attributed, receiving explanations as to why the current level of risk was assigned. These would continue to be reviewed and amended if necessary, with any changes reported back in the normal reporting cycle.

In particular, a question was raised about risk 6.7, relating to interruption to service or total inability to provide ICT services, resulting in impact to Council business.

The Cabinet:-

- (a) noted the development of the Council's Strategic Risk Register and noted that it was considered a live document and would be updated and amended by the Corporate Management Team as appropriate; and
- (b) requested further information on risk 6.7 around potential interruption or total failure of ICT services, and the amending of its status to "green".

CHAIR

MINUTE
of
AUDIT & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minute of meeting held at 2.00pm in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 21 November 2024.

Present:

Councillor Andrew Morrison (Chair)
Councillor Paul Edlin

Councillor Annette Ireland *
Provost Mary Montague *

Councillor Morrison in the Chair

(*) indicates remote attendance

Attending:

Jamie Reid, Head of Communities and Transformation; Michelle Blair, Chief Auditor; Barbara Clark, Chief Accountant; Alison Ballingall, Senior Revenues Manager; Kath McCormack, HR Manager; Liona Allison, Information and Improvement Officer; Linda Hutchison, Clerk to the Committee; and Lesleyann Burns, Assistant Democratic Services Officer.

Also Attending:

Grace Scanlin, Ernst and Young *.

Apologies

Councillors Tony Buchanan, David Macdonald and Gordon Wallace.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1044. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

CHAIR'S REPORT – SELF EVALUATION OF COMMITTEE

1045. Councillor Morrison reported that, in line with the Committee's Work Plan, work was about to commence on the Committee's self-evaluation, taking account of guidance on this available from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA). He clarified that further information on this would be sent to Members in due course.

The Committee noted the report.

BREAKFAST CART SERVICE AT NEILSTON PRIMARY SCHOOL – CLARIFICATION

1046. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 8 August 2024 (Page 906, Item 906 refers), when it had been agreed that further clarification be sought on whether or not any progress on the provision of dedicated central funding by the Scottish Government for breakfast provision for primary school pupils was likely to be made by the Scottish Government during the forthcoming year, and also the current cost of the Breakfast Cart Service at Neilston Primary School as an example of the cost at present, the Committee considered a report by the Clerk summarising the clarification received and circulated on these issues.

The Committee noted the position.

INTERIM TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT 2024/25 – QUARTER 2

1047. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 26 September 2024 (Page 906, Item 907 refers), when it had been agreed to note the Interim Treasury Management Report for Quarter 1 of 2024/25 and recommend to the Council that the organisations specified in the report for investment of surplus funds be approved, the Committee considered a report by the Head of Finance (Chief Financial Officer) on treasury management activities for the second Quarter of 2024/25.

The report explained that, in line with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management, the Committee was responsible for ensuring effective inspection of the Council's treasury management activities. In accordance with that requirement, the interim Treasury Management Report for July to September 2024 was attached to the report for consideration.

Whilst highlighting key issues, the Chief Accountant confirmed that long term borrowing remained static, with no such borrowing having been taken due to the high levels of rates currently offered. The Council continued to adopt a prudent approach to treasury management and, in particular, the percentage of loans held as at 30 September 2024 that had variable interest rates was 7.2% which was well below the Council's approved upper limit of 15%.

Having commented on short term investments which had decreased due to cash flows in both capital and revenue, she highlighted the prudential indicators referred to in the report which helped confirm that capital investment plans and treasury management decisions remained affordable, prudent and sustainable, highlighting that indicators 3 and 4 demonstrated that the Council was operating well within its limits, and that the "debt per dwelling" indicator had decreased reflecting the proposed increase in affordable housing during the current year.

Finally, the Chief Accountant commented on amendments to the Council's list of counterparties, confirming it had not changed from the one in the report for Quarter 1, other than to reflect the completion of the recent takeover of the Clydesdale and Virgin Money Bank by the Nationwide Group. It was clarified that all investments were restricted to UK bodies with high credit ratings, with the maximum period of investment, in general, restricted to 6 months.

Councillor Ireland sought clarification on two of the prudential indicators. In response, the Chief Accountant quantified movements in terms of capital expenditure from the current to next financial year due to revised planning of capital projects within both the Housing and General Fund Capital Programmes. She also commented on issues pertaining to reserves, including why it was prudent at times to use these rather than borrow funds, that use of reserves was not sustainable in the longer term, and how the temporary investments the Council had had reduced in recent years.

The Committee agreed:-

- (a) to **recommend to the Council** that the organisations for investment of surplus funds be approved in accordance with Appendix 8 to the report; and
- (b) otherwise, to note the report and related comments made.

SUMMARY OF EARLY RETIREMENT/REDUNDANCY COSTS TO 31 MARCH 2024

1048. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 18 January 2024 (Page 728, Item 707 refers), when early retirements/redundancies to 31 March 2024 had been discussed, the Committee considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships summarising the position on early retirement/redundancy costs from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 and related issues. Information on the total costs incurred and projected savings was provided.

Whilst commenting on the report, the HR Manager clarified that redundancies continued to be assessed on a financial business case basis, and referred to related costs and savings achievable which depended on the individual circumstances of each employee concerned.

The Committee noted the report.

NATIONAL FRAUD INITIATIVE - UPDATE

1049. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 26 September 2023 (Page 642, Item 597 refers), when a report on the National Fraud Initiative (NFI) in Scotland had been noted, the Committee considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships providing an update on an Audit Scotland Report *The National Fraud Initiative in Scotland 2024* and related work carried out by the Council in 2023/24.

The report highlighted that the Council had an effective approach to the NFI as confirmed by the External Auditor, confirming that a range of services participated in this exercise biennially on which a report was submitted to the Committee. Having summarised the aims of the NFI counter-fraud exercise and keys to its success, the report confirmed that the Council had a single point of contact for the NFI and a well-established internal network of departmental contacts who were responsible for comparing their own data sets, and subsequent recovery and follow up action. Mitigating potential fraud was a matter for each service area.

Having summarised the findings of the Audit Scotland report, reference was made to the 2,810 potential matches within the Council reported through the 2022/23 NFI exercise, data received subsequently and related issues and work progressed within the Council. The report also referred to related initiatives, commented that the Council was a member of various networks which circulated and shared information about potential scams and frauds, and explained that information was shared routinely across services for learning and development purposes.

In terms of next steps, it was confirmed that the NFI exercise for 2022/23 had been completed with the exception of work on Business Rates, that outcomes had been recorded and audited with Audit Scotland having compiled a related report, and that the next stage would be to start the 2024/25 exercise during 2025. It was concluded that the Council had a robust and effective approach to the NFI, complemented by existing fraud prevention measures.

Whilst commenting on the report, the Senior Revenues Manager confirmed the importance of the work done on the NFI and referred to related work progressed locally which helped increase confidence that local resources were not being misused. She emphasised that the Council took a robust and effective approach to the NFI.

The Committee noted the action taken in respect of the National Fraud Initiative in East Renfrewshire Council.

MANAGING THE RISK OF FRAUD AND CORRUPTION – FRAUD RESPONSE STATEMENT 2023/24

1050. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 26 September 2023 (Page 643, Page 598 refers), when a report on the Council's Fraud Response Statement 2022/23 had been noted, the Committee considered a report by the Chief Executive regarding the Council's Fraud Response Statement 2023/24, and providing an overview of measures in place across the Council to address anti-fraud, bribery and theft and manage the risk of fraud and corruption.

The report highlighted the authority's commitment to fighting fraud and bribery to help protect public funds, referred to the expectation that various stakeholders both within and out-with the Council would act with integrity and without the intention to commit fraud or bribery, and commented on related issues. Having referred to a revised Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Theft Strategy approved by the Corporate Management Team in December 2022 which promoted a zero tolerance attitude to fraud, in line with previous years, the annual Fraud Response Statement provided an updated overview of measures in place to address Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Theft and of work undertaken during 2023/24.

The report outlined the position on various measures in place to address anti-fraud, bribery and theft, referring to issues relating to governance; ICT and cyber-crime; procurement; and payment, insurance, payroll and HR. Related reporting arrangements and potential frauds were also amongst issues commented on. It was concluded that the report provided evidence to demonstrate full compliance with the Code of Corporate Governance.

Having heard the Senior Revenues Manager refer to the main purpose of the report, in response to Provost Montague, she explained that further clarification could be sought following the meeting on the appropriate steps being taken to minimise the risk within the Council linked to the growing concern reported that organised crime was engaging in procurement fraud; and on the checks being undertaken to address potential links between council officers and contractors used.

The Committee agreed:-

- (a) in relation to the growing concern reported that organised crime was engaging in procurement fraud, that further clarification be provided on the appropriate steps being taken to minimise the risk of this within the Council;
- (b) also regarding procurement, that further clarification be provided on the checks being undertaken to address the potential for links between council officers and contractors used; and
- (c) otherwise, to note the content of the Fraud Response Statement, the work being undertaken across the Council in relation to managing the risk of fraud and corruption, and the related reporting already taking place.

NATIONAL EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORT - TACKLING DIGITAL EXCLUSION

1051. The Committee considered a report by the Clerk on the publication in August 2024 of a report by Audit Scotland entitled *Tackling Digital Exclusion*. Under the Committee's specialisation arrangements, Councillor Morrison was leading the review of the report. The Director of Business Partnerships and Operations had been asked to provide comments and a copy of her feedback was appended to the report.

The seven key messages within the Audit Scotland report were itemised which included that digital technology had brought benefits to many of Scotland's people and communities; and that all public bodies had a responsibility for enabling digital inclusion in their programmes for reform. It was explained that Audit Scotland had set out several related recommendations for public bodies, three of which related specifically to councils.

The report summarised how the Council was responding to the requirement to build digital inclusion considerations into strategies and reform, aligned with Scottish Digital Services Standards, and how it carried out equality and human rights impact assessments. It explained that the Council had existing arrangements in place to provide clear digital and non-digital methods which people could use to access services they needed. Finally, it was explained that the Council had existing arrangements in place, but would also continue to consider digital exclusion in future strategy and policy developments, taking account of the need to work with partners to develop a clear approach to this based on an understanding of digital exclusion locally; and continued to map out local resources and assets across the public, private and third sectors providing clear routes to digital support and accessible information on the support available to local communities.

Reference was also made to recent initial discussions with officers at Renfrewshire Council which had highlighted a potential opportunity for cross-authority collaboration around their work on keeping people safe, confident and protected online via *RenSafeOnline Ambassadors*, which would be explored further.

It was concluded that the Council was making good progress on addressing the recommendations in the Audit Scotland report, and would continue to consider both digital and non-digital options in strategy and service design, working with partners to provide clear routes to accessible information for East Renfrewshire residents.

Whilst commenting on the report and progress being made, the Head of Communities and Transformation emphasised that local residents had access to other options when pursuing issues digitally was not their first choice, the aim being to offer a range of options. Whilst referring to the East Renfrewshire Digital Inclusion Partnership, he clarified that it was implementing an action plan developed around four priorities agreed by the partners, one of which was providing a blended approach to digital engagement and capacity building. On specific issues, he commented on increasing concerns amongst residents regarding on-line scams and the development of a related leaflet about this; and the opportunity identified to consider collaborative work with Renfrewshire Council as referred to in the report.

In response to Councillor Ireland, the Head of Communities and Transformation undertook to provide further clarification on the approximate number of people taking advantage of digital literacy training available, commenting on the increased demand for this during the pandemic. Also in response to her, he confirmed that ways of addressing equality issues, including the potential exclusion of those with disabilities, were always kept in mind.

Provost Montague requested sight of the leaflet regarding on-line scams, referring to the importance of ensuring that the font size within it was of a sufficient scale for ease of reading, taking account of the range of issues to be covered within it.

Having referred to existing initiatives to recycle laptops, she suggested that the recycling of mobile phones be explored, to complement other work being done aimed at helping to reduce social isolation.

On a more general issue regarding internet usage, the Head of Communities and Transformation reported that over 90% of East Renfrewshire residents over the age of 65 were internet users, this being well above the national average of 72%. He also referred to work with refugees, and the commitment to digital inclusion within the East Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership's new vision *A Place to Grow*.

Councillor Ireland welcomed the developments reported, and the collaborative work with Renfrewshire Council being explored. Regarding the latter, the Head of Communities and Transformation reported that it was too early to say when that work would come to fruition.

The Committee agreed:-

- (a) that the Head of Communities and Transformation:-
 - (i) provide further clarification on the approximate number of people taking advantage of digital literacy training available;
 - (ii) relay to those developing a leaflet on on-line scams, a view expressed regarding the importance of ensuring that the font size was of a sufficient scale for ease of reading, and in due course circulate a copy of the leaflet to Elected Members; and
 - (iii) pass on to the East Renfrewshire Digital Inclusion Partnership, a suggestion made to consider exploring the recycling of mobile phones for use to help reduce social isolation; and
- (b) otherwise, to note the report and related comments.

INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2024/25 - IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS – JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2024 (QUARTER 2)

1052. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 28 March 2024 (Page 811, Item 799 refers), when the Internal Audit Strategic Plan for 2024/25 to 2028/29 had been approved, the Committee considered a report by the Chief Auditor regarding progress made on the implementation of the Plan from 1 July to 30 September 2024.

It was confirmed that seven reports relating to planned 2024/25 audit work had been issued since the last progress report had been considered. Reference was also made to the quarterly performance indicators (PIs) for the section. No new requests for assistance were dealt with using contingency time during the quarter, but work remained ongoing on previous issues raised and investigated using the provision made for contingency.

The Chief Auditor highlighted various issues, during which she clarified that good progress was being made on implementing the Internal Audit Plan. She reported that there had been no significant findings from the audits undertaken, but drew the Committee's attention to issues relating to the St Ninians cluster, Accounts Receivable and Accounts Payable audits. Regarding various follow-up audits done, she confirmed that really good progress had been made on implementing previously agreed recommendations. She confirmed that the section was currently meeting all of its PI standards.

In response to Councillor Morrison regarding the Payroll Audit, the Chief Auditor confirmed issues reviewed regarding the use of overtime, reporting that further audit work on overtime issues would form part of a future audit.

The Committee agreed to note the report and related comments made.

CHAIR

MINUTE
of
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Minute of meeting held at 2.00pm in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 27th November 2024.

Present:

Councillor Betty Cunningham (Chair)	Provost Mary Montague
Councillor Annette Ireland	Councillor Andrew Morrison (*)
Councillor Chris Lunday (*)	

Councillor Cunningham in the Chair

Attending:

Michaela Sullivan, Head of Place; Nicola McEleny, Solicitor; Derek Scott, Principal Planner (Development Management); Keir Hunter, Graduate Planner; John Burke, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies:

Councillors Paul Edlin and Jim McLean.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1053 There were no declarations of interest intimated.

APPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

1054 The Committee considered a report by the Director of Environment on an application for planning permission requiring consideration by the Committee.

It was agreed that the applications be determined as indicated at Appendix 1 accompanying this Minute, particular reference being made to the following:-

- (i) 2023/0194/TP – Erection of 17 dwellings consisting of a flatted block of maximum 4 storey height and single storey dwelling, including access, parking, landscaping, fencing, drainage and associated works at Land at 57 Barrhead Road, Newton Mearns, East Renfrewshire.

The Principal Planner was heard further on the report, in the course of which he summarised the 38 representations that had been received.

He provided further information on the relevant planning policies and assessments and stated that the proposal was considered to comply with the terms of the development plan, including NPF4 and LDP2.

Members received clarity that the site was within LDP2 for development of social housing and officers were also heard in response to questions about the scale and massing of the building, as well as screening and the potential for overshadowing.

The Committee agreed to grant planning permission subject to the conditions set out in the report of handling.

- (ii) 2024/0005/TP – Increase in height of boundary wall at the front of the property at 22 Greenlaw Road, Newton Mearns, East Renfrewshire, G77 6ND.

The Principal Planner was heard further on the report, in the course of which he summarised the 13 representations that had been received.

He provided further information on the relevant planning policies and assessments and stated that the proposal was considered to comply with the terms of the development plan, including NPF4 and LDP2.

In discussion, members expressed concern about an issue raised by the Roads Department about the structural stability of the wall. The members were reminded by the Planner that the structural integrity of buildings is not a material planning consideration and such matters are addressed through the building warrant process. They also expressed concern about the height of the structure and whether it was in keeping with the character of the surrounding properties.

Noting that the wall was higher than any walls within the immediate surrounding area, the Committee agreed to refuse planning permission. The Committee considered the proposal was not in keeping with the amenity and character of the surrounding area and, therefore, contrary to policy D1 of LDP2.

CHAIR

APPENDIX

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997
AS AMENDED BY THE PLANNING ETC (SCOTLAND) ACT 2006
PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997**

Draft index of applications under the above acts to be considered by Planning Applications Committee
on 27th November 2024.

Reference No: 2023/0194/TP

Ward: 5

Applicant:

East Renfrewshire Council
Land at 57 Barrhead Road
Newton Mearns
East Renfrewshire

Agent:

Corri Cassells
51 St Vincent Street
Glasgow
Scotland
G3 8NQ

Site: Land at 57 Barrhead Road, Newton Mearns, East Renfrewshire

Description: Erection of 17no. dwellings consisting of a flatted block of maximum 4 storey height and single storey dwelling, including access, parking, landscaping, fencing, drainage and associated works.

Please click [here](#) for further information on this application

Reference No: 2024/0005/TP

Ward: 2

Applicant:

Mr Jim Cuthbertson
22 Greenlaw Road
Newton Mearns
East Renfrewshire
G77 6ND

Agent:

Site: 22 Greenlaw Road, Newton Mearns, East Renfrewshire, G77 6ND

Description: Increase in height of boundary wall at the front of property.

Please click [here](#) for further information on this application

POLICE SCOTLAND – PERFORMANCE REPORT - QUARTER 2 - 2024-25

1056. The Cabinet considered a report by the Divisional Commander, Police Scotland, providing details of the performance of the police over the second quarter of 2024-25. The report also provided statistical information in relation to various categories of crimes and offences committed during the reported period together with comparative statistics for the corresponding period in 2022-23.

Chief Inspector Gallie reported on the performance of the police against the five local policing priorities contained in the East Renfrewshire Policing Plan 2023-26, summarising the information contained within the report.

Chief Inspector Gallie provided some examples of the work being done in East Renfrewshire by officers of Police Scotland on all of the areas of focus covered, which were highlighted within the report.

There followed a question and answer session in the course of which Superintendent Carr and Chief Inspector Gallie responded to a number of questions and provided clarification on a range of operational issues within East Renfrewshire and the crime statistics recorded in the report.

In particular, they provided information about the progress in acquiring body cam technology for Police in the East Renfrewshire area, indicating that this would come in a phased rollout, starting with firearms officers and eventually rolling out to all officers. Police Scotland would provide further updates on this as the rollout commenced. Superintendent Carr gave further information on the robust training programme for officers regarding the use of this technology, which would follow the established guidance and code of ethics.

Focus was placed on the number of missing persons reported in East Renfrewshire, with Chief Inspector Gallie indicating that these were mainly vulnerable individuals. He indicated that all of those people had been subsequently found with no significant harm. He also reassured members around the use of CCTV and partnership working to help prevent suicides on railways in East Renfrewshire. He indicated that 1700 officers had been trained to provide interventions that aim to reduce any repeat of such incidents.

Chief Inspector Gallie provided information around reported parking and road traffic issues around Kirkhill Primary School, assuring members that the issues around road safety at schools were subject of ongoing work and discussions with Head Teachers and other partners. The Director of Business Operations and Partnerships committed to discuss particular issues around Kirkhill Primary School with relevant Council officers in order to affect a suitable solution and reassured members that these issues were the subject of ongoing review within the Council and any areas of concern would be addressed where identified.

Chief Inspector Gallie also confirmed that “Ring” doorbell footage was admissible in terms of evidence for Police, as it was not considered a public space recording. He also provided further details on the work being undertaken by Police Scotland to support the 16 days of activism against gender based violence, indicating that the meeting was taking place on day 4 of those 16 days. In particular, he highlighted initiatives taking place in schools to educate young boys on the issues around gender base violence and the behaviours associated with it.

Members were also provided assurances on reported hate crimes, which were now part of reporting following the introduction of new legislation. Those crimes reported in the quarter showed no clear trend in terms of type or particular protected characteristic which was

targeted more than any other. They indicated that they would look to give more contextual information on this in future reports, as more data was received. Members were encouraged by the high detection rates of those crimes.

Thereafter, Cabinet noted the report.

SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE (SFRS) PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE SECOND QUARTER OF 2024-25

1057. The Cabinet considered a report by the Group Commander, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS), providing details of the performance of SFRS in East Renfrewshire during the second quarter of 2024-25 against the key priorities in their local plan.

Introducing the report, Area Commander Murphy thanked the Council, Police Scotland and other partners for their work over the period, particularly over bonfire night. He also indicated that, following a recent recommendation by the Cabinet, future reports would include more contextual information to highlight the positive work being undertaken by Scottish Fire and Rescue within East Renfrewshire.

Group Commander Coughtrie then reported on the performance of SFRS on performance over quarter 2, summarising the information provided in the report, remarking on the low activity levels and no real concerns in terms of the figures.

Thereafter, he presented the statistical information contained within the report.

There followed a question and answer session in the course of which officers Murphy and Coughtrie responded to a number of questions and comments on a range of issues recorded in the report.

Councillor Pragnell, on behalf of Provost Montague, thanked the officers present for their work with Provost Montague on the “Restart a Heart” campaign held in October. This initiative saw 55 local people successfully trained in CPR and defibrillator techniques at Barrhead and Clarkston Fire Stations. In response, Group Commander Coughtrie noted that more sessions were being considered due to the event’s popularity, and further information would be made available once arrangements were in place.

Group Commander Coughtrie provided a brief update on the festive campaigns being undertaken by Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, and Area Commander Murphy spoke on the particular dangers of the period around use of unsafe lights and decorations, as well as the general increase in the consumption of alcohol and weather related issues on the roads.

Details were provided of support being offered to both Council and private sheltered housing accommodation in order to assist vulnerable residents in avoiding fire related incidents. A three-year programme had been introduced to deliver training and information for residents and staff at such complexes, and a number of high risk Home Fire Safety Visits were being carried out to improve the safety of those accommodations and assist vulnerable residents.

Group Commander Coughtrie also indicated that there had been an increase in Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals in educational facilities, and work was ongoing to provide training and information to the appropriate officers to ensure these were reduced.

Group Commander Coughtrie also responded to questions around non-fire related incidents in the Barrhead area, indicating that the incidents recorded were not connected or indicative of a wider issue there.

1036

Finally Area Commander Murphy indicated that Scottish Fire and Rescue were satisfied with the expertise, equipment and training available to its officers on road safety response, particularly with reference to the M77 corridor that ran through East Renfrewshire. He pointed out that all appliances were equipped to respond to such incidents and he was confident that, despite ongoing budget pressures, the current provision was adequate.

Thereafter the Cabinet agreed to note the report.

CHAIR'S CLOSING REMARKS

This being the last scheduled meeting of the Committee in the year, the Chair wished all those present his best wishes for the festive season.

CHAIR

MINUTE
of
CABINET

Minute of meeting held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 5 December 2024.

Present:

Councillor Owen O'Donnell (Leader) Councillor Danny Devlin (*)
Councillor Andrew Anderson (Vice Chair) Councillor Katie Pragnell

Councillor O'Donnell, Leader, in the Chair

Attending:

Steven Quinn, Chief Executive; Caitriona McAuley, Director of Environment; Louise Pringle, Director of Business Operations and Partnerships; Mark Ratter, Director of Education; Kirsty Stanners, Head of Finance; Lesley Bairden, Head of Finance and Resources, Health and Social Care Partnership; Tom Kelly, Head Of Adult Services, Learning Disability & Recovery; Kenny Markwick, Head of Environment (Operations); Jamie Reid, Head of Communities and Transformation; Mark Rodgers, Head of Housing and Property; Michaela Sullivan, Head of Place; John Buchanan, Operations Manager; Barbara Clark, Chief Accountant; Mary Docherty, Education Resources Senior Manager; Michael McKernan, Economic Development and Inclusive Growth Manager; and John Burke, Democratic Services Officer.

(*) indicates remote attendance

CHAIR'S REMARKS – ORDER OF MEETING

The Chair indicated that, to facilitate the smooth running of the meeting, the items would be considered in the order shown below.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1058. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE PARTNERSHIP CHARGING FOR SERVICES 2025/26

1059. The Cabinet considered a report by the Chief Officer – Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) on the proposed charges for the HSCP for 2025/26, including the implementation of charging for non-residential care from 1 April 2025.

The report set out the charging proposals and documents had also been circulated, and made available on the Council's website, giving details of the consultation events and exercises that had been undertaken and summarising the results of those.

1038

The Head of Finance and Resources, HSCP acknowledged that the proposals had been agreed to by the Integrated Joint Board and HSCP officers with a heavy heart, however, it was agreed that difficult decisions required to be made to balance the finances of the HSCP against the backdrop of the ongoing funding issues being felt across Scotland and the UK.

The charges proposed included a proposal to implement charging for non-residential care from 2025/26, which would bring the HSCP into line with other authorities.

There followed an extended discussion on potential options that were considered instead of the proposed charges, and it was confirmed that should the charges not be approved, it would simply result in cuts to services being required elsewhere. Assurance was also provided that charging would be linked to the ability to pay and that a financial assessment would be carried out with individuals receiving care, with referral to Money Advice and Rights Team where appropriate, and where the individual agreed to such a referral. The Head of Finance and Resources, HSCP also explained the tapering system whereby the charge would be reflective of a percentage of the individual's disposable income.

Members expressed their unease with imposing such a charge, but accepted that it may be necessary in the circumstances. However, there was discussion on any clarity regarding possible assistance included in the Scottish Government's latest budget. It was indicated that there had been no financial memorandum put in place regarding the services under discussion to date.

Following the discussion, the Cabinet:-

- (a) approved the proposed increase to existing charges for the HSCP for 2025/26; and
- (b) in recognition of the many objections received, agreed to defer decision on the charges for non-residential care until its meeting of 6 February 2025, in order to receive clarity on the impact of the latest Scottish Government budget.

SUMMARY OF DEPARTMENTAL CHARGING PROPOSALS 2025/2026

1060 The Cabinet considered a report by the Head of Finance and the appropriate Directors regarding the outcome of the charging for services carried out in each of the departments and recommended proposed fees and charges for 2025/26.

The report referred to the range of services reviewed within each department, the outcome of the reviews, proposed changes and associated resource implications for the following departments:-

- (i) Business Operations and Partnerships Department;
- (ii) Education Department;
- (iii) Environment Department; and
- (iv) Licensing.

Following a brief discussion, in which it was agreed that more be done to raise awareness of the Council's pest control services. the Cabinet agreed to:-

- (a) note the three options proposed for Early Learning and Childcare Add-On charges, and approve Option A, as recommended;

- (b) approve all proposed increases to charges and new charges set out in the report; and
- (c) noted that the Director of Education would look into raising awareness of the Council's pest control services in East Renfrewshire.

STRATEGIC MID-YEAR COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT

1061 The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships, providing a summary of Council performance at mid-year 2024-25 based on performance indicators in the Outcome Delivery Plan 2024-25. A mid-year complaints report was also included. Details of the performance results, together with information on mid-year complaints appeared as appendices to the report.

The report outlined that 31 indicators in the plan had updated data reported at mid-year, with 15 showing as "On Target", 10 as "Target to be Achieved" and 3 as "Off Target". A further 3 were indicators set for monitoring purposes and had no target set against them.

The report went on to highlight areas of progress made at mid-year under each outcome, with full details being provided in Annex 1 to the report. There was also a statutory duty to report on complaints and a mid-year summary was attached as Annex 2 to the report.

Officers responded to members questions on the figures, particularly around school exclusion rates and attendance rates in the post-COVID era. The Leader also noted the positive trend in terms of complaints, with a significant reduction and congratulated the Environment department for their sector leading work on recycling.

The Cabinet:-

- (a) scrutinised and commented on the summary of the Council's performance at mid-year 2024-25, as set out in Annex 1; and
- (b) scrutinised and noted the mid-year complaints data report at Annex 2.

LOCAL DISCRETIONARY FUND 2 – REQUEST FOR FURTHER BUSINESS GROWTH INTERVENTION

1062 The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment providing an update on the progress of the Local Discretionary Fund 2 (LDF2) programme, and seeking approval for further business growth interventions to use the remaining funds.

Cabinet had approved the use of a grant of £1,254,281 as a Local Discretionary Fund to support local businesses as part of the Scottish Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The fund had been established to support businesses from December 2022 until March 2025.

The report set out the achievements to date of the fund, and it was indicated that the success of the programme had been recognised by the local business community. Given that success, it was proposed that the funding be allowed to carry over until March 2026, to both continue to deliver existing support mechanisms and develop new programmes. Details of the programmes to be continued and the new programmes proposed were provided in the report.

1040

Members were highly supportive of the programme, in particular they praised the Accelerator Programme which had been extremely successful in supporting the growth of local professional services businesses.

The Cabinet:-

- (a) noted the activity to date on the Local Discretionary Fund 2 (LDF2) programme;
- (b) agreed to additional activities to use the remaining LDF2 allocation, as set out in paragraph 10 of the report;
- (c) delegated to the Director of Environment to vary the amounts allocated under each intervention, based on the level of take up and to ensure full spend of the Scottish Government allocation; and
- (d) agreed to extend the programme of activities to the end of March 2026.

STRATEGIC TRANSPORT SERVICE GRANT AWARD FUNDED PROJECTS 2024/2025

1063 The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment on the grant awards made to East Renfrewshire Council for active and sustainable travel and road safety projects in the 2024/25 financial year, and to outline and seek approval for the projects being progressed in 2025/26.

Annual grant funding was received from various sources to support sustainable transport and road safety initiatives. The Scottish Government had increased its commitment in this area, with a new funding delivery model being implemented for 2024/25 for projects aligning with the National Transport Strategy 2 and Regional Transport Strategy priorities. Proposed projects would also support the Council's key local transport plans.

Those projects which had benefitted from funding were detailed in the report. Appendix 1 to the report provided a list of those projects that Sustrans Scotland intended to undertake or had commenced in the 2024/25 financial year. Details were also provided of projects being looked at for the 2025/26 financial year.

In discussion, members were pleased to see the breadth of projects being undertaken and received assurances that everything was being done to ensure that those projects that were approved represented value for money and met the Council's strategy and key transport aims linked to the national strategies outlined.

The Cabinet:-

- (a) noted the grant awards detailed in the report and Appendix 1 for the 2024/25 financial year;
- (b) approved the grant funded projects outlined in Appendix 1, where approval had not previously been given; and
- (c) delegated to the Director of Environment to make adjustments to the programme depending upon the detailed costs of projects becoming available.

REVIEW OF EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL'S USE OF GLYPHOSATE

1064 The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment on a trial exploring alternative methods of reducing glyphosate usage for weed control.

A review had been initiated into the Council's use of glyphosate following a motion passed at the Council's meeting on 13 September 2023 (Page 628, Item 586 refers). Considerations in this review included general safety for staff and the public, efficacy, cost and environmental impact.

The efforts that had been undertaken to reduced glyphosate use and additional protective measures being implemented where it was still used were summarised in the report.

The report laid out the results of the trials that had been carried out and summarised the products and approaches that had been trialled along with the results. The approaches adopted by other local authorities, and their implications, were also detailed.

In discussion, it was proposed that the review continue on an ongoing basis and that Cabinet be updated on an annual basis on the progress of the review and any changes to its recommendations.

The Cabinet:-

- (a) acknowledged the reduced use of glyphosate for weed control and the protective measures in place where it is still used;
- (b) noted initial findings from testing of alternative weed control solutions, with glyphosate being the currently preferred pesticide for continued effective weed treatment;
- (c) noted that Council officers were engaged with other local authorities and were continuing to review alternative weed control approaches;
- (d) noted resource implications for wider rollouts of alternate approaches to weed control; and
- (e) agreed that the review of the Council's use of glyphosate continue with a report to be provided to Cabinet on an annual basis of progress made.

CHAIR

