

MINUTE
of
EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

Minute of Meeting held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock, on 27 February 2020.

Present:

Provost Jim Fletcher	Councillor Alan Lafferty
Depute Provost Betty Cunningham	Councillor David Macdonald
Councillor Caroline Bamforth	Councillor Jim McLean
Councillor Tony Buchanan (Leader)	Councillor Colm Merrick
Councillor Angela Convery	Councillor Stewart Miller
Councillor Danny Devlin	Councillor Paul O’Kane
Councillor Charlie Gilbert	Councillor Jim Swift
Councillor Barbara Grant	Councillor Gordon Wallace
Councillor Annette Ireland	

Provost Fletcher presided

Attending:

Lorraine McMillan, Chief Executive; Caroline Innes, Deputy Chief Executive; Mhairi Shaw, Director of Education; Andy Cahill, Director of Environment; Julie Murray, Chief Officer - Health and Social Care Partnership; Margaret McCrossan, Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer); Phil Daws, Head of Environment (Strategic Services); Fiona Morrison, Head of Education Services (Provision and Resources); Barbara Clark, Chief Accountant; Graeme Smith, Communications Manager; Eamonn Daly, Democratic Services Manager; and Linda Hutchison, Senior Committee Services Officer.

Also Attending:

Superintendent Hilary Sloan and Chief Inspector Bryan McGeoch, Police Scotland.

Apology:

Councillor Paul Aitken.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1207. Provost Fletcher and Councillors Grant, Merrick and O’Kane declared non-financial interests in relation to Items 1216 and 1218 by virtue of the fact that they were members of the East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure Trust Board.

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

1208. The Council considered and approved the Minute of the meeting held on 18 December 2019.

MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES

1209. The Council considered and approved the Minutes of the meetings of the undernoted:-

- (a) Planning Applications Committee – 15 January 2020;
- (b) Local Review Body – 15 January 2020;
- (c) Licensing Committee – 21 January 2020;
- (d) Appeals Committee – 22 January 2020;
- (e) Education Committee – 23 January 2020;
- (f) Audit and Scrutiny Committee – 23 January 2020;
- (g) Cabinet – 30 January 2020;
- (h) Cabinet – 6 February 2020;
- (i) Civic Hospitality Committee – 12 February 2020;
- (j) Local Review Body – 12 February 2020;
- (k) Cabinet (Police and Fire) - 13 February 2020;
- (l) Licensing Committee – 14 February 2020;
- (m) Appointments Committee – 18 February 2020;
- (n) Licensing Committee – 18 February 2020;
- (o) Appointments Committee – 19 February 2020; and
- (p) Audit and Scrutiny Committee – 19 February 2020.

POLICE SCOTLAND – EAST RENFREWSHIRE LOCAL POLICING PLAN 2020-23

1210. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Cabinet (Police and Fire) of 13 February 2020 (Page 1094, Item 1187 refers), when it had been agreed to recommend to the Council that the East Renfrewshire Local Policing Plan 2020-23 be approved, the Council considered the plan, which set out local policing priorities for East Renfrewshire over that period.

The Council approved the East Renfrewshire Local Policing Plan 2020-23.

TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2020/21

1211. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee of 20 February 2020 (Page 1109, Item 1206 refers), when it had been agreed to recommend to the Council that the Treasury Management Strategy for 2020/21 be approved, including the amended list of organisations for investment of surplus funds in accordance with Annex F to the report, and that the policy on the repayment of Loans Fund advances as specified in Section 3.4 of the report be approved, the Council considered a report by the Chief Financial Officer, reporting on the Treasury Management Strategy for the financial year 2020/21.

Councillor Miller clarified that in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice, the Audit and Scrutiny Committee was responsible for ensuring effective scrutiny of the Strategy, including the approved list of investors and the policy on the repayment of Loans Fund advances. He reported that clarification on various matters had been provided, highlighted that the report set out the parameters within which the treasury function

operated, and confirmed that related mid-year and annual reports would be submitted to the committee in due course.

Councillor Swift having commented that accruing further debt would place more pressure on the Council's revenue budget which was already overstretched, Provost Fletcher referred to the difficult financial position facing local government whilst Councillor Bamforth highlighted that the Council borrowing was below the limits in place.

The Council agreed:-

- (a) that the Treasury Management Strategy for 2020/21 be approved, including the amended list of organisations for investment of surplus funds in accordance with Annex F to the report; and
- (b) to approve the policy on the repayment of loans fund advances as specified in Section 3.4 of the report.

STATEMENTS BY REPRESENTATIVES ON JOINT BOARDS/COMMITTEES

1212. The following statement was made:-

(a) Integration Joint Board – Councillor Bamforth

Councillor Bamforth referred to a presentation made on the HSCP's public engagement strategy at the most recent Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) Integration Joint Board (IJB) meeting. She also reported that the IJB had agreed to invite Scottish Care to nominate a member to join the Board to strengthen partnership working and reflect their contribution within the area. It had made a commitment to establish a system locally to ensure they were truly representative of the sector by communicating directly and regularly with local providers.

The IJB had also received a progress report on Talking Points, these being places in communities where people can attend for information, support and advice about adult health, wellbeing and local activities. In the first 6 months 590 conversations had taken place and approximately 11,000 people had been reached through Facebook.

A report had also been provided on the impact of new legislation for Children and Young People on Continuing Care and related issues, such as the implications for looked after children and young people, and advice, guidance and assistance now provided to them up to age 26. Councillor Bamforth highlighted that looked after and care leavers would be encouraged to remain in positive care settings until they were ready to move on.

Other matters discussed had been actions in the Strategic Improvement Plan which had consolidated actions from the recent Joint Strategic Inspection of Adult Services, the Ministerial Strategic Group self-evaluation and the findings of the Audit Scotland report on Health and Social Care Integration; and Care at Home on which an update by the Chief Officer, HSCP had been provided and discussed and on which further updates would be provided.

The Council noted the statement.

PROVOST'S ENGAGEMENTS

1213. The Council considered and noted a report by the Deputy Chief Executive providing details of civic engagements attended and civic duties performed by Provost Fletcher since the date of the last meeting.

VISION FOR THE FUTURE

1214. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 19 May 2019 (Page 1109, Item 1206 refers), when it had been agreed to note the updated outcomes, capabilities and values which made up the overarching "Vision for the Future Strategy" that sought to begin an ongoing dialogue on the long-term ambitions for the Council's work over the next 10 years and beyond; and to approve the further development of the Strategy taking into account ongoing work such as on the Local Development Plan (LDP), the refreshed Capital Investment Strategy and City Region economic planning, the Council considered a report by the Chief Executive proposing a revision to "Vision for the Future". A copy of the revised document was appended to the report.

It was explained that since May 2019 a range of feedback had been provided through LDP2 consultation, engagement with Members, and discussions with the Council's leadership team. In addition the underpinning analysis had been strengthened in light of new research such as in relation to updated versions of Planning for the Future; the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation; and a detailed transportation study for the Community Planning Partnership.

The redrafted document reflected a general theme of 'connections' viewable various ways, such as physical connections across East Renfrewshire via greenspace development; and transport connectivity. Key themes, which were itemised, emerging from conversations over the last 6 months had been around the Council's continued and developing ambitions on a range of issues such as for empowering communities; reducing social isolation and loneliness; and eliminating poverty. Detailed action plans would be developed covering 3-year time periods through the Budget Planning and Outcome Delivery Plan process; and following Council approval the document was to be finalised and designed, with case studies added to demonstrate progress and a diverse communications programme progressed. It was clarified that the underpinning analyses would be updated regularly, the aim being to update the document itself at least once every 3 years.

Having commented on related issues including how consultation was being progressed, the report concluded that "Vision for the Future" was intended to be a living document, with it being a direction of travel rather than a detailed strategy. It was highlighted that the Council did not claim to have all the answers and genuinely wanted to hear ideas about how best to work together to improve the lives of people across East Renfrewshire over the next 10 years. Reference was made to a range of powerful, interesting and challenging themes emerging from early conversations, the goal being to continue that dialogue with a broad range of stakeholders as the vision, of a modern, ambitious Council creating a fairer future with all, continued to be built and shaped.

Councillor Grant expressed concern that opening up connections on green spaces, such as new paths, would lead to further building development in adjacent areas over time. The Chief Executive emphasised this was not intended, with discussions having centred instead on helping people to become more active, such as through the provision of road paths for cycling and running.

Having heard Councillor Merrick welcome the emphasis placed on improved mental wellbeing of children, Councillor Ireland commended the report and highlighted various matters, such as the importance of building and empowering local communities further, maintaining green space, and active travel provision through safe and sustainable infrastructure.

Councillor McLean referred to comments within the document on strengthening the Council's commitment to reducing local CO₂ emissions and encouraging electric car use. He highlighted the low number of charging points in the area, despite grant to install these from Transport Scotland for the preceding 2 years, and the lack of certainty over further such funding. He also referred to the Scottish Government's vision to almost completely decarbonise road transport by 2050; the Council's response to a freedom of information request in October 2018 which had reflected that there had been no plans to install charging points by either 2020 or 2032; and statistical information, such as on the number of houses to be built locally by 2029 and related car ownership and CO₂ emissions. Against this background, he questioned how the Administration could claim it would strengthen its commitment to reducing local CO₂ emissions; and sought further clarification on plans to increase the number of charging points, which he argued would encourage the purchase of electric cars.

Having referred to the use made of the grant received thus far to install charging points, the Director of Environment undertook to check and confirm to Councillor McLean the position on the issues he had raised.

Having questioned if equality of outcomes as specified in the document was achievable, Councillor Swift highlighted reference within it to providing more support for vulnerable children at an earlier age to ensure more progressed in line with their age, also questioning how this was achievable in light of the proposed budget reduction for support for the lowest performing, least able, 20% of pupils. Whilst acknowledging that some roads improvement had been made, he also sought clarification on how cyclists could be protected better, referring to the need to address potholes and cars parking in cycle lanes. In reply, Provost Fletcher referred Councillor Swift to the budget to be discussed later in the meeting.

Councillor Buchanan referred to the importance of the "Vision for the Future" document and how it was dynamic and would change over time, expressing the view that some proposals within it were about protecting cyclists and citing examples of cycle paths planned to address some of the issues Councillor Swift had raised. He emphasised that the document looked at issues such as these which made East Renfrewshire a great place to live and work. Referring to the delayed confirmation on the level of grant funding allocated to local authorities by the Scottish Government, he added that only time would tell what further funding for initiatives would become available.

Councillor Macdonald raised a range of matters, expressing the opinion that the prioritisation of improved mental wellbeing of children was at odds with the practice of asking children to bring their own devices to school, and referring to research findings which suggested this increased anxiety amongst some children. He also queried how reducing the amount of green space available for play at a nursery school in his ward was linked to the Vision; credited attainment and achievements not only to the Education Department but also support from parents, some of whom paid for private tuition which was not affordable by others; and expressed concern that some libraries were only open a few days a week which would impact on realising aspects of the Vision. He also referred to the concerns raised regarding the time it had taken to reinstate Rouken Glen Park following an event in 2019, suggesting further safeguards were needed to protect such assets when used for events.

Regarding the collection of household waste for recycling, Councillor Macdonald also questioned how the closure of recycling points, such as the one at Clarkston, was environmentally friendly, as residents had to drive elsewhere to dispose of material.

In reply, Councillor O’Kane acknowledged the value of parental support for pupils, but referred to the importance of the Education Department’s approach and how performance had improved at various high schools, including Barrhead and St Luke’s High Schools, as a result. Regarding the use of personal devices, he stated that Councillor Macdonald’s description did not match actual experience in East Renfrewshire schools, where the approach had been constructive and pupils were managing their own learning and use of the technology. Having heard Councillor O’Kane highlight that outdoor learning was a daily element of early learning establishments, Councillor Merrick suggested that Councillor Macdonald might value taking advantage of presentations for Elected Members on issues such as this.

Councillor Lafferty highlighted the high recycling rates in East Renfrewshire, clarifying that the introduction of local recycling facilities had pre-dated the weekly uplift of recyclable waste from households. He added that some businesses had used the local facilities inappropriately, that a shift to households recycling had followed the introduction of the new uplift arrangements, and that if any constituent held a concern regarding the uplift of recyclable material they could contact the authority for assistance.

Responding to Councillor Swift’s comments about the proposed budget reduction for support for the lowest performing 20% of pupils, Councillor Bamforth referred to the aim of supporting vulnerable children in the “Vision for the Future”, and suggested that he had supported capping expenditure on the budget for learning for children with disabilities at an IJB seminar. Taking issue with this comment, Councillor Swift clarified that he had commented on the lack of a cap on the budget whereas one existed for medicine and the imbalance between these different approaches.

Having heard Provost Fletcher highlight that the “Vision for the Future” document would develop and be altered over time as referred to earlier in the meeting, the Council:-

- (a) agreed to the further iterative development of ‘Vision for the Future’, based on an ongoing dialogue with a range of stakeholders and taking into account ongoing work, including on the Local Development Plan, the refreshed Capital Investment Strategy and City Region economic planning; and
- (b) noted the initial focus on the themes of environment/climate change and building communities.

FINANCIAL PLANNING 2020-2026

1215. Under reference to the Minute of meeting of 28 February 2019 (Page 740, Item 803 refers), when the Outline Revenue Financial Plan for 2019-25 had been approved, the Council considered a report by the Chief Financial Officer seeking approval of the updated Outline Revenue Financial Plan for 2020-26.

The report explained that in view of the significant financial and demand pressures facing the Council in the current and following 6 years, it was essential that its financial plans were updated regularly. This was in line with the Council’s agreed financial policy on basing decisions on an assessment of medium to long-term needs and consequences.

The report explained that despite a recent move to annual budgets by the Scottish Government and significant shifts in the local government budget allocation which made long-term planning challenging, the Council had continued to plan its detailed revenue budgets over a 3 year time horizon, updating them annually. The Scottish Government had been unable to move to publishing multi-year settlements from 2020/21 as intended due to the General Election, but hoped these would recommence from 2021/22 which would facilitate the Council's revenue planning. The Plan had taken account of the 2020/21 draft settlement, which was subject to change when the final Scottish and UK budget plans were confirmed on 5 and 11 March respectively. The Council's Outcome Delivery Plan and outline multi-year plans for 2021/22 onwards would be refined once the impact of the final figures was known.

It was highlighted that financial planning was extremely difficult in the present economic and political situation, that Brexit uncertainty further complicated matters, and that there was a need to plan for a range of scenarios. Having commented on the financial outlook, the report summarised the position on various demand pressures, making reference to issues such as demographics, capital infrastructure, the City Deal and legislative change in addition to wider political, societal, and economic change. Issues pertaining to the Outline Revenue Financial Plan and a range of mitigating actions open to the Council, such as through its Modern Ambitious Programme, partnership working, service reductions, income generation and the use of reserves were commented on.

The Council:-

- (a) noted the increasing budget pressures anticipated in the next six years and the mitigating actions proposed; and
- (b) approved the Outline Revenue Financial Plan 2020-26.

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL REVENUE ESTIMATES 2020/21

1216. The Council considered a report by the Chief Financial Officer relative to the proposed Revenue Estimates for 2020/21 of income and expenditure as the basis for the Council Tax declaration for 2020/21. A copy of the Revenue Estimates 2020/21 was appended to the report.

The report outlined the revenue budget process, commented on the Scottish Government's Grant Funding for 2020-21, and explained that in determining the grant distribution the Scottish Government had again put in place the "Floors" arrangement to ensure year-on-year grant stability at individual council level. Under this arrangement, the Council would contribute £0.764m by way of deduction from Aggregate External Finance (AEF) grants in 2020/21. This was slightly less than in recent years and was reflected in the figures in the report.

Having commented on Non-Domestic Rates income, the report referred to the financial outlook and the practice in recent years of setting multi-year budgets. Given the ongoing financial outlook, it was proposed that the Council continued to adopt a longer-term financial planning approach, but as the expected multi-year Scottish settlement was not yet available and as 2020/21 was the last year of the Council's current 3 year budget cycle, it was proposed to agree plans only for 2020/21. Officers would continue to model departmental figures for 2020/21 to 2022/23 and update figures as set out in the Council's report on Financial Planning 2020-2026 for longer-term planning purposes. It was anticipated that a further 3 year budget would be set in February 2021 when multi-year figures were announced by the Scottish Government.

Taking account of a range of matters, the report referred to a total initial budget shortfall of £18.059m for the coming year. This was higher than expected when the indicative budget had been estimated with the main reasons for this being summarised.

The report explained that the Council was permitted to increase Council Tax by up to 4.84% in 2020/21, but that in the 3-year budget plans prepared following public consultation in February 2018, a 3% Council Tax increase had been included for each of the 3 years thereafter. Due to sustained financial challenges, a 4.84% Council Tax increase for 2020/21 was proposed. This would increase income by £2.722m, and reduce the budget gap to £15.337m.

It was explained that savings of £6.807m for 2020/21, agreed in February 2018 following consultation, remained available to reduce the outstanding budget gap, but clarified that this had been reduced from the original savings identified of £7.036m to reflect a restriction on the level of savings that could be applied to IJB budgets. Taking these savings into account a reduced shortfall of £8.530m remained. Further savings of £3.752m, including £2m from using loans fund repayment flexibility, had been identified in the current year and were proposed to assist in addressing the remaining shortfall. The revised savings proposed, including those previously agreed in the original 3 year budget plans, were set out in Appendix A to the report.

The latest 2019/20 monitoring forecast was that there would be an underspend of £1.622m by the year end, which had been taken into account when considering scope to draw on reserves. As a result it was proposed that a further £2m of the remaining savings requirement be deferred on a short-term basis by a drawdown of the unallocated general reserve funds, in addition to the £1.5m utilisation of unallocated general reserve already agreed for 2020/21. The net effect of these actions would be to reduce the budget shortfall to £1.278m. It was confirmed that Directors, other than the IJB Chief Officer, would compile further savings plans to close the remaining gap but that given the late availability of the settlement figures, detailed proposals were not yet in place.

Related issues commented on included scope for further changes to the grant settlement, the intention to await details of the final figures before identifying further savings, the possibility of savings being deferred subject to the final budget settlement, the efforts being made to minimise the impact on front line services, savings from efficiencies and the Modern Ambitious Programme (MAP), and the focus on the Council's 5 capabilities.

The report explained that further cash reductions in grant were forecast for the years following 2020/21, producing ongoing shortfalls for the next 5 years. For 2021/22 a mid-range budget shortfall of £12.406m was forecast after applying an assumed 3% Council Tax increase for that year.

The report commented on the Revenue Estimates for 2020/21 following which specific reference was made to the impact of Welfare Reform on Council services and contingency provision to help the Council support change. Reference was also made to the assumed Council Tax collection rate for 2020/21 and reserves and balances issues, particularly the General, Modernisation, Insurance, Equalisation, and Repairs and Renewal Funds and Capital Reserve. Having referred to efficiency issues and the equality impact assessment carried out on the budget saving measures, the report concluded by indicating that the Revenue Estimates appended to the report were based on a Council Tax Band D level of 1,289.96 being set for 2020/21, representing a 4.84% increase compared to 2019/20.

Councillor Buchanan was then heard on the proposals highlighting that during the last year significant progress had been made on delivering various ambitious projects, citing examples of building work underway on 6 new nurseries offering 740 places from August

2020, and the opening of Maidenhill Primary School in August 2019. He also commented on the number of new tenants in the new council houses in Barrhead; that work was to start on further properties as part of the Council's plans to build 240 homes for rent; that some of the authority's most vulnerable residents would move into vastly improved facilities at Bonnyton House; and that further expenditure of £3m on roads per annum announced last year would continue.

However, Councillor Buchanan also referred to the financial challenges to be faced. He welcomed the additional £8.5m received from the Scottish Government for the new nurseries, to fund changes to teachers' pay, boost pupil counselling, and meet responsibilities of the Carers Act. He reported that until 26 February, the funding received for vital services was to have been reduced by approximately 1% on a like-for-like basis. However additional information now provided by the Scottish Government indicated that funding closer to a flat cash settlement was to be received. Whilst welcoming this additional funding Councillor Buchanan highlighted that difficult decisions remained to be made to ensure children, the elderly and most vulnerable were supported, and services such as road gritting continued. He stressed that the Administration would do its utmost to ensure the Council continued to deliver its pledges.

He thanked Accountancy staff and the Corporate Management Team (CMT) for their hard work bringing forward the Budget which delivered an ambitious programme of capital investment and continued to help those most in need. He also thanked the Trade Unions for the representations they had made on behalf of their members.

Councillor Buchanan explained that following the latest Scottish Government announcement the Council's 2020/21 grant settlement was now expected to be slightly higher than the £189.4m referred to in the report. However new conditions were attached to expenditure, with 60% of the Council's budget ring-fenced for national initiatives and policy priorities such as education and social care. This had related consequences for other core services.

Councillor Buchanan was then heard on the budget shortfall and some of the contributory reasons for this including inflation, pay rises and an increasing local population. He clarified that plans outlined at the start of the 3 year budget in 2018 had been further developed, with savings, reserves and a Council Tax increase to be used to contribute to addressing the shortfall, and as referred to in the report that only £6.8m of around £7m savings identified before could now be used due to the protection of the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) budget.

Referring to the steps being taken to address the budgetary shortfall Councillor Buchanan reported that further £3.7m of new savings had been identified, including reduced funding for the East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure Trust (ERCLT), savings from devolved school management budgets, and reducing extra support for the lowest performing pupils. A plan to identify a further £1.3m of savings during 2020/21 was no longer required given the recent funding announcement by the Scottish Government, and some of the most challenging savings identified were to be reviewed regarding which a report would be submitted to a future meeting. In addition he explained that £3.5m, rather than £1.5m of reserves would also be used to bridge the funding gap. This was not a long-term solution but would delay reductions to vital services. This was possible due to the estimated 2019/20 budget underspend of £1.6m. Over the 3 year budget cycle, £6.2m of reserves would be used, reducing reserves by approximately 60% by the end of 2020/21.

To meet the remaining shortfall, a difficult decision had been made to recommend a Council Tax increase of 4.84%, generating £2.7m of extra income. Councillor Buchanan acknowledged this placed an extra burden on residents, but clarified it avoided further

funding reductions on services such as schools, recycling and public infrastructure. He highlighted that the 2019/20 Council Tax increase had been well below the maximum allowable, the Council having been one of a minority to have had such a low increase and having set its Band D Council Tax below the Scottish average. The 4.84% increase proposed was to address funding to be received, meet savings challenges over successive years, and protect services.

Councillor Buchanan also commented on timing of the Scottish and UK Government budgets, the lack of multi-year settlements the consequential effect being the Council was only able to set a budget for 2020/21. Notwithstanding, forecasts for 2021/22 and 2022/23 already indicated a budget shortfall of £12.4m based on a Council Tax increase of 3%. This would require further difficult decisions to be made.

He stressed that the Council remained committed to protecting valued frontline services through increasing efficiencies, referring to the contribution streamlining of processes was making to savings. He also referred to the updating of computer systems and the Council's website to enable residents to communicate with the Council more easily. In 2020/21, 59% of required savings would come from the Modern Ambitious Programme (MAP) and other efficiencies, with 67% of savings coming from efficiencies as part of the current 3-year budget.

Councillor Buchanan then referred to the Council's ongoing commitment to delivering ambitious projects, confirming that over the next 10 years £209m would be spent on capital plans, with two thirds being spent and the most ambitious projects due to be completed in the next 3 years. Whilst itemising expenditure on various projects, he referred to the six new, high quality nurseries being constructed to help deliver the Scottish Government's flagship policy of almost doubling early learning and childcare provision. Other projects referred to as part of the commitment to deliver the best outcomes in learning, life and work included, the £15m Maidenhill Primary School; and the ambitious £30.4m project, being progressed in partnership with the Scottish Government, to replace Neilston and St Thomas's Primary Schools, and build the Madras Family Centre, as part of which a new swimming facility and a community and well-being hub would also be created. Whilst commenting on pupils' achievements and rising attainment, Councillor Buchanan highlighted that inspection reports confirmed St Ninian's High School and Our Lady of the Mission Primary School to be the best secondary and primary school in Scotland respectively, referring to the aim of providing access to modern educational and leisure facilities across the area. He added that young people's life chances in care were also greatly improving by the long term commitment to the Champions' Board, which allowed them to directly influence officers and Elected Members.

The Council's commitment to providing much improved new leisure facilities in Eastwood Park was also referred to, in respect of which at least £26m had been set aside for the project and plans were to be progressed when the Council had considered options. Councillor Buchanan confirmed ERCLT Board Members and staff would be involved in deciding what facilities would be provided in the new amenity.

Reference was made to work in partnership with other authorities, in support of the economy and environmental protection, to convert household waste to low carbon energy which would complement the authority's recycling achievements. These environmental protection commitments extended to the Council's housebuilding programme, to the new, environmentally friendly homes built in Barrhead for rent, others to be constructed there and in Newton Mearns, and would help to address the needs of those facing homelessness and create local employment, apprenticeships and work placements. Opportunities for local economic growth at the Greenlaw Business Centre, Newton Mearns, and more generally the role of an improved transport network and the funding provided by the Council in recent years to improve local roads and pavements were also highlighted.

Councillor Buchanan was also heard on overall quality of life for East Renfrewshire residents, indicating that, in partnership with Police Scotland, East Renfrewshire continued to have the lowest crime levels in mainland Scotland, that the Citizens Panel Survey found 95% of residents to be satisfied living in the area, and that the HSCP was working tirelessly to improve the lives of the most vulnerable. Extra investment in home care provision, a related recruitment campaign, work done to support residents return home from hospital without delay, and work at Bonnyton House to improve and create facilities were highlighted, with such projects reported to play a major role in improving peoples' lives.

In conclusion Councillor Buchanan referred to the challenges faced, highlighting that a range of measures would tackle the savings gap, balance the budget, and protect front line services. He stressed that the Council would continue to press for further funding and look at new and innovative ways to make savings. It was projected that the number of jobs in the authority would fall by approximately 290 by 2021, which would be offset by the creation of more than 200 roles in nursery care. No compulsory redundancies would be made in 2020/21. Councillor Buchanan stressed that staff were the authority's best asset and played a key role in delivering the very best services to residents, adding that the range of capital projects to be taken forward would also help realise this ambition. Having referred again to various projects, he stated that the Council was one that delivered. He moved that the Council:-

- (a) approve the 2020/21 revenue estimates;
- (b) approve the proposed actions should there be a late change to the grant settlement;
- (c) approve the recommended level and use of reserves;
- (d) determine the 2020/21 Council Tax Band D level at £1,289.96; and
- (e) note that the management of the Council's finances and service plans would continue to be undertaken on a longer-term basis.

Seconding the motion, Councillor O'Kane highlighted that the Budget was set in the difficult context of the financial settlement becoming known late, commenting that the Administration had worked hard to deliver it in the circumstances and against a background of financial uncertainty and ongoing local government funding reductions. He added that all Elected Members had a duty to argue, as he would, for better long-term local government settlements and parity of esteem amongst spheres of government to assist with planning, as the future of high quality services was at risk. He argued in support of the Government taking cognisance of the spending pressures councils faced, such as to address the growing elderly population and with new initiatives to be delivered.

Councillor O'Kane referred to the need to make difficult decisions, use additional funds to close the funding gap and revisit challenging savings, such as those impacting on schools and the most vulnerable. He referred to the Administration's commitment to securing services, protecting the most vulnerable, and safeguarding jobs and terms and conditions, highlighting the Council was often the last line of defence against austerity. He cited the example of Universal Credit as an issue on which the Council had been required to pick up the pieces, such as through the MART team and Citizens Advice Bureau. He added that as much as possible had been done to mitigate cuts by using reserves and powers to increase Council Tax, which he considered necessary to protect valued services and investment, such as on roads. He reported that local people often told him they would be willing to pay more rather than lose services.

Councillor O’Kane was heartened to observe progress on many ambitious capital projects, including nurseries which would give young people a great start, commenting that education remained one of the Council’s greatest successes. He welcomed the capital investment for future generations, including on the all-weather running pitch and track at Mearns Castle High School, on improved fit for purpose learning environments in pursuit of excellence and equity, and on cultural, leisure and community facilities. Having acknowledged that investment in educational facilities would take time, he explained that learning environments would be upgraded meantime to meet modern requirements, such as to support the emphasis on STEM subjects and the playful pedagogical approach in Early Years. He referred to the types of adaptations that would be made based on a pilot project at Braidbar Primary School which had been well received and in which children had been central to the developments that had been introduced.

Councillor O’Kane considered the £209m capital programme to be wise investment for everyone and to improve services that mattered most to residents. Having added that the Council’s budget remained to be refined, he expressed the view that a balanced budget had been developed, that every effort had been made to sustain services and project jobs, and that everyone needed to continue to fight East Renfrewshire’s corner as residents expected.

Thereafter, Councillor Miller, seconded by Councillor Swift, moved as an amendment that the Estimates be approved, subject to the details set out in Appendix 1 accompanying this Minute.

Councillor Miller thanked the Head of Accountancy and Chief Accountant and their teams for their hard work over the past months and weeks. He also thanked the Chief Executive and CMT for their work to produce the budget, and Councillor Swift for his work on the amendment. He added that the amendment figures could be a little out of date as they had been prepared prior to the most recent funding announcements by the Scottish Government.

Councillor Miller suggested Councillor Buchanan had not been completely candid in his comments, as the nationalist Scottish Government continued to underfund local authorities for services they were expected to provide. Whilst acknowledging that councils were receiving more funds than before, he highlighted that the Government was placing more burdens on their budgets annually, with the local authority once again receiving a 1% cut in real terms equating to a flat cash settlement. This was despite £0.5bn extra being allocated to the Scottish Government by the United Kingdom Government last year, and an additional allocation of £1bn being received for the forthcoming year. He acknowledged difficulties faced by the Scottish Government as its budget remained to be confirmed, but added that the Welsh Assembly had produced its budget in December 2019 with the same information at its disposal. He depicted the allocation to local government by the Scottish National Party as austerity.

Councillor Miller stated that the Opposition had reviewed the amendments it had proposed previously. He reported that in 2008 the Administration had included in their budget a new leisure centre in Eaglesham which had been welcomed then but which had never been developed there or elsewhere. The Opposition Leader had also proposed a business incubator to encourage new business then and subsequently, adding that he had been delighted therefore to attend the opening of Greenlaw Works, the same incubator the Opposition had proposed.

Councillor Miller referred to a fully funded £10m proposal made by the Opposition in 2018 on roads expenditure to be implemented over 3 years in recognition of their infrastructural importance. This had been rejected at the time. However the Opposition had welcomed the subsequent allocation of £3m per annum from 2019/20 onwards. In view of this continuing commitment it had not been considered necessary for the Opposition to include further funding in their amendment.

Councillor Miller also referred to other examples where Opposition proposals rejected in the past now appeared to be accepted by the Administration. By way of example reminded Members that in 2019 the Opposition, having taken advice and spoken to some teachers who considered schools to be too warm in winter, had proposed a reduction in schools utilities consumption which was rejected. Having referred to comments made against that proposal by the Convener for Education and Equalities at the time, he highlighted a £50k reduction proposed in utilities consumption by the Administration in its 2020/21 budget.

Regarding the amendments proposed this year, Councillor Miller commented that no Elected Member would be happy reducing by £442k support for the lowest performing 20% of school pupils, highlighting that the Scottish Government had requested and supplied funds for investment in this. The Opposition did not support the Administration's proposed reduction in this budget in the interests of improving attainment, holding the view that education was the best way out of poverty. Councillor Miller added that the lowest performing pupils often lived, but not always, in the least affluent areas. He implored the Administration to use some of the further funding coming from the Scottish Government, which he anticipated would be used to fill the unfunded budget gap, to minimise the proposed reduction in support or eliminate the reduction altogether.

Councillor Miller then queried the affordability of a Council Tax increase of 4.84%, commenting that few would have had a 5% increase in their income, that the Administration had said it would limit the increase to 3% which some would have budgeted for, and that the increase was particularly hard on those with a fixed income, such as pensioners and those with young children which equated to almost half the local population. He clarified that the Opposition proposed limiting the increase to 3%, which was not easy for some residents, but better than 4.84%. He acknowledged why the Administration had proposed what it had, attributing blame to the failing nationalist Scottish Government.

Whilst expressing the view that the proposed amendments were largely self-explanatory, he commented on each one. He referred to a sum allocated for concert income, suggesting it was not unreasonable to budget for a further event, not necessarily in Rouken Glen Park. Other proposals advocated included achieving a modest sum through advertising income; a 5% reduction in the use of Agency staff, and the same reduction in overtime costs. He also commented on the reorganisation of the CAB and MART team to provide a one stop shop for all rights advice through a properly funded CAB, and the proposal to extend, with some exceptions such as for teachers, the average time taken to recruit new staff from 74 to 135 days. He stated that if this was implemented, no jobs would be lost and posts would be filled over time, acknowledging that stress levels of existing officers could rise when covering tasks meantime, but adding that some posts could be filled immediately, if required.

In conclusion, Councillor Miller commented that his understanding was that the Council was duty bound to publish a balanced budget by 11 March, observing that the Administration's proposed budget left an unfunded gap of £1.278m. He acknowledged that individuals had not sought elected office to make savage cuts forced on the authority by the Scottish Government. Councillor Miller added that the Opposition also had an unfunded financial gap which was slightly less than that of the Administration, but highlighted that further funding had just been announced which could close the gap and leave some funding left over. He urged the Administration to allocate this to supporting the lowest 20% of pupils.

Seconding the amendment, Councillor Swift thanked the Head of Revenues and Chief Accountant for their assistance. He stated that the budget amendments improved upon the Administration's proposals regarding fairness in education and levelling up for the least advantaged; more and better use of resources to raise money; and less reliance on increasing Council Tax by more than twice the rate of inflation, which punished residents, to fund services the Scottish Government would not fund.

Councillor Swift commented that, under the SNP's charge locally, in Barrhead the Council would be rebuilding changing rooms and pavilions that had been knocked down shortly after being built. He highlighted that the Scottish Government demanded that the authority build more houses, but neither funded schools required for the young people in them nor expenditure on roads, doctors surgeries or nurseries which were only partly funded centrally. He added that while resources provided to the Scottish Government had increased despite claims of Conservative austerity, local government funding was being cut, not just in real terms, and that residents wondered how the Scottish Government received more funds per capita than the rest of the UK, whilst local government remained underfunded. Councillor Swift also commented that despite various taxation changes, there was a tax shortfall whilst funds were wasted on issues such as ferries and hospitals that did not operate or at least properly.

Whilst commenting that the Council proposed construction in parks, Councillor Swift reported that the SNP planned to build leisure centres in Neilston and Eastwood, but had looked at neither adequately. Furthermore, he referred to a three-fold increase in borrowing by the Council and the related interest to be paid, whilst current services could not be maintained.

Councillor Swift highlighted that it was not proposed to do much differently as the Scottish Government had left the Council little room for financial manoeuvre, whilst the SNP locally would not fight the national stance to support local people and services.

The amendment proposed not cutting the pupil support budget, and increasing Council Tax by a rate closer to inflation as the Administration had proposed last year. Councillor Swift said that such proposals reflected that only the Conservatives stood with those who believed education was the gateway to equalising outcomes and improving society, and believed people should be judged by their character not the funds their parents had. He argued that the proposed 4.84% Council Tax increase punished hardest the least affluent, that many local residents were asset rich but cash poor, and that their pensions had not necessarily increased by 5%.

Councillor Swift also suggested that the Administration had wanted to cut the IJB budget and had been prevented from doing so by the Scottish Government. This would have put services for the elderly at peril when they were already in crisis because of lack of funds. He expressed hope that any new resources the authority was allocated would be used to support vulnerable people, adding that the Opposition was looking after them, both young and old.

In conclusion, Councillor Swift stated that in sharp contrast to political opponents, the Opposition believed in opportunity for all, referring to the duty that fell to the Council to look after older and vulnerable residents well.

Thereafter a full discussion on the proposals took place.

Councillor Grant commented that support for school education was commendable, but argued for the removal of the cap on places for Scottish students at Scottish universities. Councillor Devlin highlighted that this was not a matter under local control by the Council.

Commenting on the amendment, Councillor Lafferty stated that the Opposition had provided a lack of detail regarding the proposal to generate advertising income, emphasising he did not support advertising on roundabouts which he considered distracting.

Councillor Macdonald reported he would have preferred the Administration Budget to place less emphasis on ambitious capital projects and more on normal services, arguing that a progressive revenue programme was not being pursued. Having cited the example of

parking problems, such as in Clarkston, he suggested that the introduction of parking charges should now be explored further, contrasting income from these in Glasgow and locally. Whilst acknowledging differences in the types of authorities these were, he suggested a review was merited in the face of a 4.84% Council Tax increase.

Council Bamforth stated that the Scottish Government grant settlement was a refund in part of what was paid, that not all funds were passed on by the UK Government, and that nobody wanted to increase Council Tax, contrasting the level of Council Tax in East Renfrewshire with higher levels paid in some other Scottish and English authority areas. She attributed the utilities budget reduction in schools to fuel efficiency in new build properties, and referred to comments made at one point by Councillor Swift on the learning disability support budget.

Referring to the comments made by Councillor Swift, Councillor Ireland referred to the authority's investment in local roads. Regarding comments made by Councillor Macdonald, she referred to the work recently completed by the Audit and Scrutiny Committee on income generation. She did not support the Opposition's proposal to reorganise the CAB and MART team, referring to extensive work both did, such as on Universal Credit.

Summing up, Councillor Buchanan was heard in response to some of the issues raised during debate. He emphasised that austerity since 2008, led by the Conservative Party, continued to impact on local government.

Commenting on the suggested review of parking charges, he reminded the Council that this had been explored about 5 years ago, reporting that the vast majority of Clarkston residents had not favoured change then, but that if they had changed their minds this could be revisited. He clarified that the position at the goods yard there, which had been mentioned by Councillor Macdonald, had been examined at that time.

Regarding the Opposition amendment, Councillor Buchanan reported that the additional funds secured would impact on what could be done, and that there may not be a need to make some savings. He considered the proposed Council Tax increase valid in the current circumstances, and cited examples of exemplary services provided by the authority based on an Administration that was delivering for local people.

Councillor Buchanan confirmed that the Audit and Scrutiny Committee's recommendations on income generation were under consideration, and commented further on the use of income and reserves, following which he dismissed the suggestion made regarding the CAB and MART services, especially at a time when Universal Credit was being rolled out. He did not consider any of the proposed Opposition amendments acceptable, and referred to the plans being made to examine the remaining funding gap and related issues.

On a vote being taken, 10 Members voted for the motion, 6 Members voted for the amendment and there was 1 abstention.

The motion was accordingly declared carried and it was agreed to:-

- (a) approve the 2020/21 revenue estimates;
- (b) approve the proposed actions should there be a late change to the grant settlement;
- (c) approve the recommended level and use of reserves;
- (d) determine the 2020/21 Council Tax Band D level at £1,289.96; and
- (e) note that the management of the Council's finances and service plans would continue to be undertaken on a longer-term basis.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY

1217. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 28 February 2019 (Page 751, Item 805 refers, when an update to the Capital Investment Strategy had been approved, the Council considered a report by the Chief Financial Officer seeking approval of a new Capital Investment Strategy.

Taken together with the Treasury Management Strategy report, it provided background information on the scale, objectives, affordability and risks associated with the Council's capital plans. A copy of the revised Strategy, which all councils were required to prepare, was appended to the report specifying the long-term capital ambitions of the Council and associated resource implications and risks, having been compiled with regard to these requirements, the Prudential Code 2017, and Treasury Management Code of Practice 2017.

Having clarified that the Strategy adopted a long-term approach to capital planning beyond the span of the Council's current capital plans, taking direction from the Outcome Delivery Plan and other key plans and strategies, the report confirmed that Council determined objectives within it would be driven forward by the CMT working with partner organisations and local communities to ensure investment aligned to strategies, and that performance was measured against expected outcomes. A long-term strategic and financial view was considered essential for resilience in uncertain times and the Strategy would be updated as required. A prudent approach to affordability and risk would continue to be taken, with delivery of projects to be closely monitored at officer and Elected Member level. Against the background of the Council's significant capital investment ambitions, the Strategy, together with the Treasury Management Strategy, Capital Plan and Revenue Estimates and Financial Planning reports, set out how these would be funded and managed.

The Council approved the updated Capital Investment Strategy.

GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PLAN 2020/21-2029/30

1218. The Council considered a report by the Chief Financial Officer, seeking approval of the General Fund Capital Plan covering the 10 years from 2020/21 to 2029/30. A copy of the Plan, prepared in line with the approach within the Capital Investment Strategy, accompanied the report.

The Council, having heard Councillor Swift comment that the all-weather pitch and running track at Mearns Castle High School would be welcomed by the local community:-

- (a) approved the Programme for 2020/21 and authorised officers to progress the projects contained therein; and
- (b) agreed to revise the Plan during the year in the light of updated information relating to detailed plans for Eastwood Leisure Centre.

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET 2020/21

1219. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 28 February 2019 (Page 753, Item 807 refers), when the Council had approved the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget for 2019/20, the Council considered a report by the Director of Environment making recommendations in relation to the proposed rent increase for council housing for 2020/21.

Having referred to the need to review legislative requirements, local priorities, related costs and what would be sustainable, affordable and acceptable to tenants when determining the level of rent increase required, the report clarified that a key legislative challenge for the Council in recent years had been meeting and maintaining the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS), in addition to which sustainability improvements to the energy efficiency rating of its housing stock under the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (ESSH) were required by 2020 on which ongoing investment was needed. These challenges were in addition to addressing routine requirements. Having commented on considerable service improvements in recent years but also related challenges, such as in relation to Universal Credit, the report explained that approval of the proposed rent increase of 3.4% for 2020/21 effective from April 2020 would assist the Housing Service address some of the issues tenants considered priorities. It was explained that the Council was also keen to continue to provide new homes for local residents. 59 had been built thus far, the Cabinet having also approved an expansion of the Council's house building programme.

The report commented on a range of related matters further, including affordability, the impact of the rent increase, staffing, loan charges and additional investment. It was also explained that the Housing Service was currently undertaking a significant redesign, which included procurement of a new in-house IT system, a key driver of the redesign being the utilisation of better digital technologies to benefit both customers and officers.

Councillor Devlin was heard in support of the proposals during which he referred to the balance needed between making improvements to the housing stock, such as to enable them to be heated more efficiently, and keeping rent levels reasonable. He confirmed that the authority's rent levels were lower than other local landlords, and that the service performed above the Scottish average in 5 of 8 performance indicator categories used.

Councillor Wallace welcomed that the service performed well in 5 performance categories, but expressed concern regarding the remaining 3, such as the rent collection rate where performance was 1% below the Scottish average of 99.1%. He referred to the adverse financial consequences of both this and the failure to let some vacant properties or delays in re-letting which he had raised before. Having also referred to the time taken to address some non-emergency repairs, he encouraged the service to address these issues.

In response Councillor Devlin commented on hard work that had been done and was ongoing to reduce voids, discouraged a focus being placed on small performance differences reported between authorities, and referred to the quality of the housing service.

The Council agreed that a rent increase of 3.4% be applied for the financial year 2020/21 with effect from April 2020.

HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2020/21 TO 2024/25

1220. The Council considered a report by the Director of Environment, seeking approval of the proposed 5-year Housing Capital Programme for 2020/21 to 2024/25.

The report clarified the position on various matters, including how the programme had recently been dominated by the need to invest to meet the Scottish Quality Housing Standard (SQHS) and first Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (ESSH1) by 2020/21. Having clarified that the Scottish Government was introducing further energy efficiency targets for social housing to be achieved by 2025 (ESSH2), and commented on related investment requirements, the report explained that funds had been carried forward to the 2020/21 programme linked to some project delays in 2019/20, with some further delay and additional carry forward being possible.

Having commented on the need to achieve a difficult balance between tenants' aspirations regarding housing improvements, investment affordability, and the implications of the age of the Council's housing stock, the report provided details of key areas on which the Housing Capital Programme would focus for the next 5 years, including investment of £30.3m to complete the delivery of 240 new council houses; of £3.8m in central heating; of £2m primarily in house re-wiring and the upgrading of smoke detectors; of £9.5m in external structural projects; and of £5.1m in the installation of internal elements such as kitchens. Other projects itemised included investment of £150k to fund house purchase opportunities such as through the Scottish Government's Mortgage to Rent Scheme; of £1.5m in sheltered housing; and of £91k on the further development of the new Housing Management IT system.

The report commented on a range of further matters, including how the programme was financed, related issues and monitoring arrangements. It was concluded that the levels of investment within the programme were essential to allow the Council to continue to meet the SQHS, to meet the future requirements of EESSH, and to provide homes that would address the needs and aspirations of current and prospective tenants. It was emphasised that although continued investment was affordable and would be welcomed by tenants, resources were tight and prudent financial management was required.

Councillor Wallace commented on slippage regarding the house building programme, expressing frustration that it had taken 4 to 5 years to build the first 59 houses. Having emphasised that the Opposition supported council house building, he encouraged those involved to ensure targets were met.

Councillor Devlin highlighted the number of council houses on which construction would start during the forthcoming year. Councillor Buchanan referred to tenants' previous right to buy and the authority's ability to build new houses offering life-long tenancies, but highlighted that there was limited land in the Council's ownership, such as due to its sale by the former Eastwood District Council, which in turn limited what could be done.

The Council:-

- (a) approved the proposed 2020/21 to 2024/25 Housing Capital Programme; and
- (b) authorised the Director of Environment to progress the projects contained within the 2020/21 programme.

CHANGES TO PRE-DETERMINATION HEARING PROCEDURE

1221. The Council considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive advising the Council of legislative changes which would mean that any major planning applications subject to a pre-determination hearing would no longer need to be determined by the full Council, and seeking the Council's view on how to proceed.

The report clarified that Section 38A of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 required a pre-determination hearing to take place for planning applications for major developments that were significant departures from the development plan. It was for individual planning authorities to decide on their hearing procedures. Having summarised the Council's current arrangements for such applications, the report explained that under the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019, from 1 March 2020 the requirement for the full Council to decide any major planning application subject to a pre-determination hearing was removed, requiring the Council to decide how to proceed. Three options were considered worthy of consideration, the first being for the standard 7 member Planning Applications Committee to

deal with them, and the second being for an extended Planning Applications Committee comprising all 18 Elected Members to deal with such applications. The third was for the applications to be dealt with by the standard Planning Applications Committee, but to extend its membership to include those Elected Members in whose ward the application was located if they were not already members of it. Arguments for and against each option were summarised.

Having referred to the decision taken to webcast full Council meetings only, the report explained that it had become practice to webcast pre-determination hearings and the full Council meeting which followed these when the final decision on applications was taken because of the link between the business transacted at both. Due to the likely controversial nature of the applications in question, the level of interest in them, and as a precedent had been set, it was proposed that meetings where such applications were considered should continue to be webcast.

Councillor Ireland, supported by Councillor O’Kane, expressed support for the second option, referring to related issues such as how such applications were often controversial and the importance of transparency regarding them. She was also heard in support of the proposal to continue to webcast the proceedings for such applications and, requested that training on the legislation be made available.

In response to Councillor Miller, the Democratic Services Manager confirmed that if Option 2 was approved, there would be no requirement for a full Council meeting to be convened following the meetings of the extended Planning Applications Committee.

The Council:-

- (a) noted the legislative changes that would no longer require any major planning applications subject to a pre-determination hearing to be determined by the full Council;
- (b) agreed that an extended Planning Applications Committee, comprising all 18 Elected Members, be established to deal with the applications referred to at (a) above;
- (c) agreed that, as at present, meetings dealing with major planning applications that are subject to a pre-determination hearing continue to be webcast;
- (d) agreed that the Scheme of Administration and Scheme of Delegate Functions be amended accordingly; and
- (e) noted the request for training on the new legislation to be made available to all Elected Members.

POST OF DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

1222. The Council considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive requesting that, following notification of the retirement of the Director of Education with effect from 23 August 2020, arrangements be put in place to ensure continuity and stability within the Education Department, and seeking approval for the establishment of an Appointments Committee for the Director of Education post.

The report summarised the contribution the Director of Education had made in the field of education, not only within the Council in her current and previous posts, but also out with it.

The Council, having heard Councillor O’Kane, supported by Councillor Buchanan, refer briefly to the Director of Education’s long and successful career and welcome the length of time the Director had made available to appoint a new Director and ease the transition:-

- (a) noted the retirement of the Director of Education with effect from 23 August 2020;
- (b) approved the recruitment procedure proposed as detailed in the report and agreed to the appointment of an external advisor;
- (c) authorised the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chief Executive, to make the necessary arrangements;
- (d) agreed that membership of the Appointments Committee comprise Councillors O’Kane (Chair), Buchanan, Merrick, Miller and Wallace; and
- (e) authorised the Chief Executive to put in place appropriate interim management arrangements for the Department if required.

THE EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL (DISABLED PERSONS’ PARKING PLACES)(ON-STREET PARKING) ORDER 2020

1223. The Council considered a report by the Director of Environment proposing that the Council approve the making and confirmation of “The East Renfrewshire Council (Disabled Persons’ Parking Places)(On-Street) Order 2020”.

The report explained that the Disabled Persons’ Parking Places (Scotland) Act 2009 required local authorities to designate and control the use of all disabled persons’ parking places, referring to related duties that fell to the Council and clarifying that advisory bays were no longer permitted and the related consequences. Having referred to consultation on the proposed Order which would prevent misuse of parking places designated for the exclusive use of Disabled Blue Badge holders, the report clarified that the Council had not received any related objections. It was clarified that the related financial implications of implementing the Order would be met from the Parking Account.

Having heard Councillor Lafferty in support of the proposal, Councillor Swift and Depute Provost Cunningham asked for further clarification on the right that had existed until now to enforce parking restrictions in places designated for disabled persons and issue related fines, some of which were known to have been issued.

Referring to comments made earlier in the meeting, Councillor Ireland having suggested that there could be merit in doing a wider piece of work on parking issues in Clarkston, the Council agreed:-

- (a) to approve the making and confirmation of “The East Renfrewshire Council (Disabled Persons’ Parking Places)(On-Street) Order 2020” and to delegate to the Director of Environment the implementation of the Order in accordance with the associated statutory procedures; and
- (b) that further clarification be provided on the right that had existed prior to the implementation of the Order to enforce parking restrictions in places designated for disabled person and issue related fines.

THE EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL (ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING PLACE)(ON-STREET AND OFF-STREET CAR PARKS) ORDER 2020

1224. The Council considered a report by the Director of Environment proposing that the Council approve the making and confirmation of “The East Renfrewshire Council (Electric Vehicle Charging Place)(On-Street and Off-Street Car Parks) Order 2020”.

The report referred to the Scottish Government’s vision of almost completely decarbonising road transport by 2050, associated with which it was encouraging local authorities to participate in a project to provide a network of plug-in charging points for electric vehicles. Reference was made to related funding and procurement issues, following which the report clarified that the Order was to ensure charging points were reserved for the exclusive use of electric vehicles whilst they were being actively charged, and allow Parking Attendants to enforce any contraventions of the Regulations. Having referred to consultation on the proposed Order, the report clarified that no related objections had been received. It was clarified that the related financial implications of implementing the Order would be met from the Parking Account.

Councillor Lafferty was heard in support of the proposal and, in response to Councillor Swift, on how it would be determined that appropriate vehicles were using the spaces in accordance with the Regulations.

The Council agreed to approve the making of “The East Renfrewshire Council (Electric Vehicle Charging Place)(On-Street and Off-Street Car Parks) Order 2020” and to delegate to the Director of Environment the implementation of the Order in accordance with the associated statutory procedures.

THE EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL (C9 AURS ROAD, BARRHEAD TO NEWTON MEARNS)(30 MPH & 40MPH SPEED LIMITS) ORDER 2020

1225. The Council considered a report by the Director of Environment proposing that the Council approve the making and confirmation of “The East Renfrewshire Council (C9 Aurs Road, Barrhead to Newton Mearns)(30mph & 40mph Speed Limits) Order 2020”.

The report referred to the profile and features of the C9 Aurs Road between Springfield Road, Barrhead, and the northernmost access lane to Ryat Lynn Reservoir, including in terms of access provided to areas such as residential development sites. To reflect current and future features of this stretch of road, it was proposed to extend the existing 30mph speed limit from the junction with Springfield Road approximately 910 metres towards a point approximately 150 metres northwest of the northernmost access land to Ryat Lynn Reservoir. Similarly, reflecting features of the road between the Reservoir and the B769 Stewarton Road, and taking account of proposed recreational development forming part of the City Deal programme, the report proposed introducing a 40mph speed limit at a point approximately 150 metres northwest of the northernmost access land to Ryat Lynn Reservoir and the existing 40mph speed limit northwest of the junction with the B769. It was clarified no related objections had been received, and concluded that the new limits would improve safety and promote safer travel, in line with aims of the Council’s Local Transport Strategy.

The report also explained that under the Council’s Scheme of Administration, all Roads Orders required to be dealt with by the full Council, which had timing implications for the introduction of Orders, particularly those that were urgent. It was proposed that Roads Orders be dealt with by the Cabinet in future, and highlighted that the Cabinet “call in” procedures would apply to such proposals.

Whilst commenting further regarding future Roads Orders, Councillor Lafferty proposed that where relevant Local Members expressed concerns in relation to such an Order that the matter be referred to the full Council as a matter of course.

The Council, having heard the Democratic Services Manager in further clarification, agreed:-

- (a) to approve the making and confirmation of "The East Renfrewshire Council (C9 Aurs Road, Barrhead to Newton Mearns)(30 mph & 40mph Speed Limits) Order 2020" and to delegate to the Director of Environment the implementation of the Order in accordance with the associated statutory procedures;
- (b) that subject to consultation having taken place with the relevant Local Members and no concerns having been raised, the making of Roads Orders be delegated to the Cabinet;
- (c) that where Local Members had expressed concerns in relation to a proposed Roads Order, the making of such Orders be submitted to the full Council; and
- (d) that the Scheme of Administration be amended accordingly.

EAST RENFREWSHIRE HSCP INTEGRATION SCHEME

1226. The Council considered a report by the Chief Officer, Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP), presenting draft revisions to the Integration Scheme for the East Renfrewshire HSCP which had been developed in consultation with partner HSCPs in the Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board area.

It was explained that the Public Bodies (Joint Working)(Scotland) Act 2014 had established the legal framework for integrating health and social care in Scotland, and that the legislation required territorial NHS health boards and local authorities to integrate strategic planning and service provision arrangements for adult health and social care services, whilst providing local discretion to include other functions, such as children's health and social care services. The Council and Health Board had jointly prepared, consulted on and sought approval of the first Integration Scheme in May 2015, which was subsequently approved by the Scottish Government in June 2015 leading to the establishment of the Integration Joint Board (IJB).

Reference was made to the requirement for the Integration Scheme to be reviewed and revised after five years. In consultation with partner HSCPs in the Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board area, a draft of the revised Scheme had been prepared, a copy of which was appended to the report. Having clarified that the Scheme detailed the role and responsibilities of the IJB, the Council and the Health Board, in enabling the IJB to discharge its functions, the report itemised amendments proposed, the majority of which were technical drafting changes, such as changes of tense following the establishment of the HSCP and operational issues.

It was clarified that further consultation would take place with stakeholder groups in March and April 2020 as required under the 2014 Act, with further changes made to reflect the outcome. A timeline for this and the approval of the revised Scheme by the Scottish Government was provided, which included provision to resubmit the revised Scheme to the Council at the end of April if required. It was concluded that the revised Scheme provided a light touch update and did not result in any changes to the powers and functions of the IJB.

The Council:-

- (a) approved the current draft Integration Scheme to allow a period of consultation to commence;
- (b) agreed to delegate authority to the Chief Officer, HSCP, in consultation with the Council and NHS Chief Executives, to submit the final revised Integration Scheme following the consultation exercise; and
- (c) noted that if during the consultation process any significant issues were to arise, the Chief Officer, HSCP would report back to the Council for a decision on these.

PROVOST

1136

CONSERVATIVE AMENDMENT PROPOSALS 2020/21

	Administration	Conservative Proposals
	Savings £000s	Savings £000
Support for Lowest Performing 20% Pupils	£ 442	£ 0
Council Tax Increase (4.84%)	£2,722	
Conservative Council Tax Increase (3%)		£1,687
Concert Income		£ 50
Advertising Income		£ 50
Property Strategy		£ 50
5% Reduction in Agency Staff		£ 50
5% Reduction in Overtime		£ 40
CAB/MART Reorganisation		£ 80
Extending Recruitment Time by 2 Months		£1,230
<u>Total Budget Savings</u>	£3,164	£3,237
<u>Unfunded Gap</u>	£1,278	£1,205
<u>Final Total</u>	£4,442	£4,442