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MINUTE
of
CABINET

Minute of Meeting held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 7 December 2017.

Present:

Councillor Tony Buchanan (Leader)	Councillor Alan Lafferty
Councillor Caroline Bamforth	Councillor Colm Merrick

Councillor Buchanan, Leader, in the Chair

Attending:

Caroline Innes, Deputy Chief Executive; Mhairi Shaw, Director of Education; Andy Cahill, Director of Environment; Jim Sneddon, Head of Democratic and Partnership Services; Iain MacLean, Head of Environment (Major Programmes and Projects); Andy Corry, Head of Environment (Operations); Jane Corrie, Roads and Transportation Controller; Jamie Reid, Partnership and Community Services Manager; Jen Cassells, Senior Environment Officer; and Paul O'Neil, Committee Services Officer.

Apologies:

Councillors Danny Devlin and Paul O'Kane (Deputy Leader).

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

248. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL CLIMATE CHANGE REPORT 2016/17

249. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment, seeking approval of the Council's 2016/17 climate change report for submission to Scottish Ministers, a copy of which was appended to the report.

Whilst noting that the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 placed a range of duties on public bodies, including local authorities, to take action to mitigate against the impact of climate change, the report explained that the Climate Change (Duties of Public Bodies: Reporting Requirements)(Scotland) Order 2015 came into force on 23 November 2015. This placed a duty on public bodies to prepare a report, annually, in relation to compliance with the climate change duties.

The report highlighted that in terms of climate change mitigation, the Council continued to perform well achieving a further 8.2% reduction in carbon emissions against the 2015/16 baseline. A priority during 2017/18 would be for the Council to ensure that internal reporting requirements/methodology in relation to environmental sustainability took account of the new arrangements required by the new legislation. These changes would be incorporated into the revised Environmental Sustainability Strategy and action plan as an action being undertaken during 2017/18.

The Cabinet approved the Council's 2016/17 climate change report for submission to Scottish Ministers.

EASTWOOD LEISURE CENTRE/CAMPUS

250. The Cabinet considered a joint report by the Directors of Environment and Education, providing details about the current condition of Eastwood Park Leisure Centre, Eastwood Theatre, and Carmichael Hall and outlining options for further consideration regarding future leisure provision and the Eastwood Park Campus more generally.

The report provided background information about the measures the Council had taken since 2014 to address the deteriorating condition of Eastwood Leisure Centre. This included the commissioning of consultants, Turner and Townsend to prepare a business case supporting the establishment of a long-term vision for the facility and to outline how the leisure centre could be improved for customers whilst at the same time operating more efficiently. Details of the consultant's report that was submitted to the Council in June 2014 were outlined in the report.

Whilst noting that in December 2014 the Council had agreed to establish a leisure trust and having noted that at the Budget meeting in 2015 the Council had made provision in the General Fund Capital Plan of £6 million for the refurbishment of the leisure centre to be spread over 2018/19 and 2019/20, the report explained that it had been recognised that once the Trust was established a further review would be required.

Details of the changing environment in which the leisure centre had been operating in since 2014 were outlined in the report. Whilst noting that to inform the Council's options regarding the future of the leisure centre/campus a further report was commissioned in 2017, the report explained that the consultants highlighted that there were significant maintenance issues that had been identified at the leisure centre and that Carmichael Hall and Eastwood Theatre also required major renovation and refurbishment if they were to remain fit for purpose.

Furthermore, the consultants had considered 4 options regarding the future of the leisure centre/campus and had carried out an option appraisal exercise highlighting the costs associated with pursuing each option. The options were noted as option 1 – status quo; option 2 – address current maintenance issues; option 3 – redevelopment on existing site; and option 4 – new build facility.

The report highlighted that the consultant's recommendation was that the Council should take forward and development a full feasibility study and business case for a new build facility (i.e. option 4) at an alternative location within the Eastwood area. In addition, it was suggested that any proposal for a new build leisure facility should have an option for including a theatre.

The report concluded by advising that the Council now needed to consider its position with regard to the existing leisure facilities within Eastwood Park. However, to do this it was proposed that the Council should have all the relevant information to fully inform any future decision. It was therefore proposed that a public consultation exercise be carried out in relation to the 4 options; that at the same time a comprehensive feasibility study and full business case be commissioned for a new facility at an alternative location; and in due course a masterplan with options be commissioned for the Eastwood Park Campus.

The Cabinet:-

- (a) noted the 4 options regarding the future leisure provision within the Eastwood area of the Council;
- (b) approved the proposal to undertake a public consultation exercise with regard to the 4 options; and
- (c) instructed the Directors of Environment and Education to commission for consideration by the Council:-
 - (i) a comprehensive feasibility study and full business case for the potential construction of a new build leisure and recreational facility with pool, theatre and conferencing facilities at an alternative location within the Eastwood area of the Council; and
 - (ii) a masterplan with options for the Eastwood Park Campus in future.

ROADS REVENUE PROGRAMME – RESULTS OF EAST REN DECIDES

251. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 22 June 2017 (Page 46, Item 38 refers), when it was agreed amongst other things to approve a “participatory budgeting” exercise to take place to apportion £600,000 of the Roads Revenue Budget allocation, the Cabinet considered a joint report by the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Environment, providing details of the results of the Roads Revenue Programme participatory budgeting exercise, entitled “East Ren Decides”. Full details of the exercise together with information on the full evaluation were appended to the report.

Whilst noting that the process was designed to give residents more influence over roads investment, with a particular focus on residential areas, the report highlighted that 33 residential roads and footways across 4 locality areas were identified by roads engineers as being in need of repair, it being noted that they were unlikely to feature in the normal maintenance programme. Details of the 4 locality areas in East Renfrewshire were listed in the report.

The report explained how the 10 week consultation exercise had been promoted highlighting that almost 1,300 residents had voted in the exercise by using the Council’s online tool Citizen Space. The cost of progressing with the top two schemes in each locality area would be £50,000 over the £600,000 budget that had been set aside for the process.

However, it was noted that once the schemes were put out to tender the prices for each scheme could be more or less than the estimated value. As a result, it was proposed that the Director of Environment be granted delegated powers to adjust the details of the schemes to ensure that the £600,000 allocation was fully committed.

The Cabinet:-

- (a) noted the results of the participatory budgeting exercise and the ranking of the scheme;
- (b) noted the key messages and learning points from the evaluation of the process;
- (c) approved the recommendation to take forward the top two schemes in each area; and
- (d) agreed that the Director of Environment be authorised to put the schemes out to tender and adjust the details of the schemes to ensure that the £600,000 allocation was fully committed.

CHAIR

MINUTE
of
EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

Minute of Meeting held at 7.00pm in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock, on 13 December 2017.

Present:

Provost Jim Fletcher	Councillor Alan Lafferty
Councillor Paul Aitken	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 in the Chair

Attending:

Lorraine McMillan, Chief Executive; Caroline Innes, Deputy Chief Executive; Julie Murray, Chief Officer - Health and Social Care Partnership; Mhairi Shaw, Director of Education; Andy Cahill, Director of Environment; Margaret McCrossan, Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer); Sharon Beattie, Head of HR, Customer and Communications; Louise Pringle, Head of Business Change and Revenues; Gillian McCarney, Strategic Services Manager; Emma Edwards, Communications Manager; Eamonn Daly, Democratic Services Manager; and Jennifer Graham, Committee Services Officer.

Also Attending:

Group Manager Paul Devlin, Strathclyde Fire and Rescue; and Anthony McReavy, Chief Executive, East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure.

Apology:

Depute Provost Betty Cunningham.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

252. Councillors Devlin, Grant, Merrick and O’Kane declared a non-financial interest in item 270 below by virtue of their membership of the Board of East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure Trust.

Variation to Order of Business

In accordance with the terms of Standing Order 19, Provost Fletcher altered the order of business to facilitate the conduct of the meeting it being noted that he proposed to take Agenda Item 12 – East Renfrewshire Local Fire and Rescue Plan after Agenda Item 3 – Presentation of Provost’s Award, and to take Agenda Item 15 – Financial Controls after Agenda Item 7 – Items Remitted to the Council.

PRESENTATION OF PROVOST’S AWARD TO ANNE-MARIE KENNEDY

253. Provost Fletcher welcomed to the meeting Anne-Marie Kennedy, her family and guests and advised that Mrs Kennedy was the recipient of the Provost’s Award 2017.

Provost Fletcher explained that Mrs Kennedy had contributed to a number of organisations in East Renfrewshire over many years including Community Transport and as Chair of Voluntary Action East Renfrewshire. She had dedicated many years of her life to promoting good deeds throughout East Renfrewshire and managed 47 volunteer drivers within the community transport service allowing members of the public with no access to transport to attend medical appointments and to access other community events and activities keeping them connected to their local community. She had successfully raised funds to purchase 3 accessible people carriers ensuring that those less able in society could attend local events and appointments. She was passionate about patient welfare and had taken part in cleanliness inspections of hospital wards and had chaired the local patient/user partnership group. She was also a regular attendee at Community Planning Partnership meetings. These examples were only a small fraction of what Mrs Kennedy had achieved for her local community over many years and the award was undoubtedly well deserved.

Thereafter, Provost Fletcher presented the award to Mrs Kennedy.

EAST RENFREWSHIRE LOCAL FIRE AND RESCUE PLAN

254. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Cabinet (Police and Fire) of 26 November 2017 (Page 218, Item 237 refers), when it was agreed that the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for East Renfrewshire 2017 be submitted to the meeting of the Council on 13 December for approval, the Council considered a report by the Local Senior Officer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS), providing details of the East Renfrewshire Local Fire and Rescue Plan 2017.

The plan had been developed to support the delivery of local outcomes for East Renfrewshire’s communities in conjunction with the national priorities contained in the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Strategic Plan 2016-2019. The plan provided information on the local area, including a review of operational activity across East Renfrewshire, and local priorities for East Renfrewshire were outlined including Domestic Fire Safety; Unintentional Harm and Injury; Deliberate Fire Setting; and Non-Domestic Fire Safety, amongst other things. It was further reported that, in order to remain flexible to local and national priorities, the plan would be reviewed at least every three years and sooner if required.

The Council approved the East Renfrewshire Local Fire and Rescue Plan 2017.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

255. The Council considered and approved the Minutes of the meetings held on 25 October and 21 November 2017.

MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES

256. The Council considered and approved the Minutes of the meetings of the undernoted, except as otherwise referred to in Items 257 and 258 below:-

- (a) Cabinet – 26 October 2017;
- (b) Planning Applications Committee – 1 November 2017;
- (c) Local Review Body – 1 November 2017;
- (d) Cabinet – 9 November 2017;
- (e) Audit and Scrutiny Committee – 9 November 2017;
- (f) Education Committee – 16 November 2017;
- (g) Licensing Committee – 21 November 2017;
- (h) Planning Applications Committee – 21 November 2017;
- (i) Cabinet (Police and Fire) – 23 November 2017;
- (j) Cabinet – 30 November 2017; and
- (k) Cabinet – 7 December 2017.

CABINET – 7 DECEMBER 2017 – EASTWOOD LEISURE CENTRE/CAMPUS

257. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Cabinet of 7 December 2017 (Page 232, Item 250 refers), when it was agreed to undertake a public consultation exercise with regard to the 4 options outlined in the report, Councillor Grant proposed that the consultation should be carried out as widely as possible and include a list of any potential sites for the new build option (Option 4).

In response, the Director of Environment confirmed that the consultation process would be carried out as widely as possible and could include information on possible sites for Option 4, although he emphasised that a view on the most appropriate site for any new build would not form part of the consultation process. Referring to discussions which had taken place in the past regarding refurbishment of the leisure centre, Councillor Wallace expressed concern that refurbishment had not taken place earlier and a further report on the future of the leisure centre, which was expected in February 2017, had been delayed. He referred to a comment made by the previous Leader of the Council prior to the local elections in 2017 stating that there was a determination by the Council to ensure that the leisure centre would be refurbished or rebuilt. However, Councillor Wallace understood that the footprint of the proposed new build leisure centre was too large to ensure that the leisure centre would remain within Eastwood Park. In response, Provost Fletcher added that his preference would be for the leisure centre to remain within Eastwood Park but accepted that a different site may offer the best facilities for local people, and that is what the consultation process would determine.

Further discussion took place on the consultation process and option costs, following which the Director of Environment advised that information on all costs, including revenue costs, could form part of the consultation document and confirmed that, if Option 4 was subsequently chosen as the preferred option, any consideration of the location of the leisure centre would become part of the future planning process.

The Council noted the information.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE – 16 NOVEMBER 2017 – SQA EXAMINATION RESULTS 2017

258. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Education Committee of 16 November 2017 (Page 201, Item 226 refers), when the committee noted the update and comments made, Councillor Wallace sought clarification regarding some of the comments made about attainment in both Barrhead High School and St. Luke's High School and whether or not the differences were as a result of family affluence or teaching methods. In response, the Director of Education confirmed that both were contributory factors.

The Council noted the information.

INTERIM TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT FOR 2017/18

259. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Audit & Scrutiny Committee of 9 November 2017 (Page 194, Item 220 refers), when it had been agreed to recommend to the Council that the organisations listed in the report for investment of surplus funds be approved, the Council considered a report by the Chief Financial Officer, providing details about the Council's treasury management activities for the first 6 months of 2017/18.

The Council:-

- (a) noted the interim Treasury Management Report 2017/18; and
- (b) approved the use of the organisations listed at Appendix II to the report for the investment of surplus funds.

STRATEGIC MID-YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT 2017-18 – COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP AND COUNCIL PERFORMANCE

260. Under reference to the Minute of the Meeting of the Cabinet of 30 November 2017 (Page 220, Item 242 refers), when it was agreed that the report be remitted to the Council for further consideration, the Council considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive providing a summary of the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) and Council mid-year performance in 2017/18 based on performance indicators in the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) and Outcome Delivery Plan (ODP) 2017-20.

In response to questions, the Deputy Chief Executive advised that Scottish Public Services Ombudsman data had not been included as this was a mid-year report and that the mid-year status had also affected some of the other data referred to within the report. She added that any changes would be reflected in the end-year report which would be submitted in due course.

The Council noted the report.

GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2017/18

261. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Cabinet of 30 November 2017 (Page 222, Item 245 refers), when it was agreed to recommend to the Council that the proposed adjustments to the General Fund Capital Programme 2017/18 be approved, the Council considered a report by the Chief Financial Officer recommending adjustments to the 2017/18 General Fund Capital Programme in light of issues that had arisen since the programme had been approved.

Referring to the costs associated with Eastwood Leisure Centre, Councillor Swift sought clarification on the accuracy of the costs contained within the capital programme. In response, the Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer) advised that there were a number of ways to provide assurance in the programme, which was often planned very far in advance, including an annual review of the programme by the Corporate Asset Management Group and regular progress updates within capital reports.

In response to further questions, Councillor Buchanan confirmed that the units in Barrhead were now fully operational and occupied, and although there had been some slippage with the timetable for completion of the rail halt in Barrhead which was outwith the Council's control, work on the project continued.

The Council:-

- (a) approved the movements within the programme; and
- (b) noted that the shortfall of £225,000 would be managed and reported on a regular basis.

HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2017/18

262. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Cabinet of 30 November 2017 (Page 223, Item 246 refers), when it was agreed to recommend to the Council that the proposed adjustments to the Housing Capital Programme 2017/18 be approved, the Council considered a joint report by the Chief Financial Officer and Director of Environment, recommending adjustments to the 2017/18 Housing Capital Programme in light of issues that had arisen since the programme had been approved.

The Council:-

- (a) approved the movements within the programme; and
- (b) noted that the shortfall of £55,000 would be managed and reported on a regular basis.

BARRHEAD FOUNDRY REFURBISHMENT 2017/18

263. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Cabinet of 30 November 2017 (Page 223, Item 247 refers), when it was agreed to recommend to the Council that an increase of £246,000 to the previously agreed budget allocation for the Barrhead Foundry in the General Fund Capital Plan be approved to cover the increased contract costs and also the proposed works at Neilston Pool to be phased in as appropriate over 2017/18 and 2018/19, the Council considered a report by the Director of Environment recommending an increase to the previously agreed budget allocation.

The Council agreed:-

- (a) to approve the increased provision of £246,000 for the Barrhead Foundry in the General Fund Capital Plan to cover the increased contract costs; and
- (b) that the proposed works at Neilston Pool be phased as appropriate over 2017/18 and 2018/19.

FINANCIAL CONTROLS

264. The Council considered a report by the Chief Executive providing information on the present responsibilities of officers and Elected Members for the financial management of the Council and for the reporting of financial and audit matters to the Council.

The report provided information on the roles of the Section 95 Officer; Chief Auditor; Audit & Scrutiny Committee; and the External Auditor for clarification. Reference was also made to the updated Financial Regulations which were approved by Council in June 2017 which included information on the Council's budgetary control; financial controls; financial systems, and the reporting procedures in place.

Councillor Swift advised that as the information contained within this report provided clarification on financial controls, he would seek to withdraw Motion No. 2 on the agenda relating to financial thresholds and timelines at the appropriate time. However, he highlighted that a number of serious financial failures had taken place within the Council in recent years, with the loss of thousands of pounds, and some Elected Members had only been made aware of these failures through the local and national press and that this should not be allowed to happen again. He further advised that, had Elected Members known about the losses earlier, they could have insisted on changes being made earlier.

He further highlighted that the credit control function had moved between four different services in the previous four years; staff turnover was high; and procedures were not being adhered to, which had led to a number of mistakes being made. In addition local businesses had been affected as payments were often delayed or underpayments made. He recognised that some improvements had been made but highlighted that more required to be done to ensure that adequate financial procedures were in place and being followed.

The Council noted:-

- (a) the background information on the roles of the Section 95 Officer, the Chief Auditor, External Auditor and the Audit and Scrutiny Committee with regard to financial controls; and
- (b) the established reporting procedures associated with financial controls in the Council.

NOTICE OF MOTION No. 1

265. In accordance with Standing Order 25, the following notice of motion had been submitted by Councillor Swift, seconded by Councillor Miller.

“East Renfrewshire Council deplores the comments made by Councillor Buchanan in his first debate as Council leader where he smeared the opposition Conservative Councillor Jim Swift with a false accusation. This attributed to Councillor Swift that he sought a 5% reduction in education budget to pay for roads improvements at a local community council event (the comment was minuted and attributed to someone else). It is even more regrettable that the Leader of the Council was unwilling to apologise for the lie that besmirched his fellow Councillor, when asked for an apology at the last Council meeting.”

Councillor Buchanan advised that he had previously apologised to Councillor Swift for the comments made, and apologised again for any distress caused, following which Councillor Swift accepted the apology and with the agreement of Councillor Miller agreed to withdraw the motion.

NOTICE OF MOTION No. 2

266. In accordance with Standing Order 25, the following notice of motion had been submitted by Councillor Swift, seconded by Councillor Miller.

“Financial thresholds and timelines

The Leader of the Council at the last meeting gave partial information on the thresholds above which serious failures in financial controls would be submitted to certain elected members. As every Councillor has a duty to ensure that the Council maintains its fiduciary duties, accordingly we all have a right to know.

To that end we believe that all Councillors should be informed about failures in financial controls as per the following criteria and within the following timelines:-

1. A failure in financial controls and an actual loss to the Council of £5,000 or more should be communicated by e-mail or writing to all Councillors within 14 days of the event being uncovered.
2. A failure in financial controls with no loss to the Council, but the Council was at risk of a loss above £20,000 as agreed by internal audit should be communicated to all elected members within 14 days of the event being uncovered.
3. All other failures in financial controls should be communicated to the Chair of Audit and Leader of the Council within 28 days.”

As referred to at item 264 above on financial controls, Councillor Swift with the agreement of Councillor Miller agreed to withdraw the motion.

PROVOST’S ENGAGEMENTS

267. 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.

STATEMENTS BY REPRESENTATIVES ON JOINT BOARDS/COMMITTEES AND COMMUNITY JUSTICE AUTHORITY

268. The following statements were made:-

(a) Integration Joint Board

Councillor Bamforth referred to the meeting of the Integration Joint Board held on 29 November 2017 when it was reported that, as an attempt to sell Bonnyton House had been unsuccessful, a number options for the future of Bonnyton House were submitted for consideration. She advised that the IJB

had agreed to approve the option to retain Bonnyton House and to remodel the services provided there, which would include a palliative care unit. She advised that existing staff would work with GPs and other services, including the Care Inspectorate, as appropriate, to pull together the services required for Bonnyton House and a further report would be submitted to the IJB in April 2018.

The Council noted the position.

(b) **Education establishments**

Councillor O’Kane reported that he had recently attended the official opening of the new Joint Faith Campus in Newton Mearns, consisting of St. Clare’s and Calderwood Lodge Primary Schools, and earlier that day he had attended the official opening of the refurbished and extended Crookfur Primary School. He expressed his thanks to everyone involved in both events and wished the school communities well for the future.

The Council noted the position.

AUDIT & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – APPOINTMENT OF REPLACEMENT MEMBER

269. The Council considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive, seeking the appointment of a new member to serve on the Audit & Scrutiny Committee following the resignation of Councillor Aitken.

The Council agreed that Councillor Swift be appointed as the new member to serve on the Audit & Scrutiny Committee.

EAST RENFREWSHIRE CULTURE AND LEISURE TRUST - BUSINESS PLAN 2018/19

270. The Council considered a report by the Director of Education seeking approval of the East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure Trust (ERCL) 2018/19 Business Plan. A copy of the Business Plan was appended to the report.

The report explained that the East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure Trust was established as an independent charity, registered with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) on 1 July 2015. The charitable objectives of the Trust were laid out in the *Articles of Association*, details of which were outlined in the report.

Furthermore, a business planning process was outlined in the Services Agreement between the Trust and the Council that vested the Trust with the assets to deliver culture and leisure services on behalf of the Council. It was noted that as part of the agreement an annual business plan would be presented to the Council not less than three months before the beginning of the financial year. The Trust’s first Business Plan and budget was submitted in February 2016 in recognition that the Trust was constituted in July 2015.

The report explained that the third East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure Trust Business Plan gave a clear strategic direction that was in accordance with the Council’s strategies and was supported by detailed operational plans which delivered the Council’s objectives under the Single Outcome Agreement and would guide the work of the Trust and its staff to deliver high quality services to the residents and communities of East Renfrewshire.

The Council approved the proposed Business Plan for 2018/19, subject to the budget being confirmed at the Council's budget meeting.

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL – BEST VALUE ASSURANCE REPORT

271. The Council considered a report by the Chief Executive, presenting the Council's Best Value Assurance Report (BVAR) published in November 2017 following an audit of Best Value carried out by Audit Scotland on behalf of the Accounts Commission, and setting out the main findings of the audit; key recommendations and a proposed action plan to address the report's recommendations. A copy of the Best Value Assurance Report was appended to the report.

The report explained that a new approach to the audit of best value had been introduced, based on a five year audit programme, and six councils, including East Renfrewshire, had been selected to participate in the new approach. The scope of the audit was wide ranging and a number of key areas were selected including the Council's vision; financial management; financial planning; and community engagement, amongst other things. The audit was carried out between March and August 2017, and involved a mix of evidence gathering, desk-based research and data analysis. A range of meetings, including Cabinet and Audit & Scrutiny Committee were observed, and staff focus groups were carried out.

East Renfrewshire's Best Value Assurance Report was considered by the Accounts Commission on 12 October 2017 and published by Audit Scotland on 7 November 2017. Five recommendations had been made and an action plan had been developed to set out the key actions to be progressed. It was reported that the Council had a strong culture of continuous improvement and the BVAR reflected the significant progress which had been made across the Council in recent years. It was highlighted that a wide range of areas demonstrated sector-leading practice with some areas of challenge highlighted for future years which were already being focussed on with community partners and in self-evaluation work. The report captured the value that the Council placed on working closely with partners to ensure effective collaboration for the good of all residents.

Councillor Buchanan explained that this had been a long, arduous process, but a number of strengths and sector-leading practices had been highlighted, including in Education and Children's Services. The report referred to a clear vision and strategic direction and the generally good working relationships between Elected Members and the Corporate Management Team. A number of areas for monitoring were highlighted, including better scrutiny of committee papers, and he reported that training for Elected Members would take place in early 2018. He expressed his thanks to staff, community partners and external auditors for their involvement in this process.

A full discussion took place in the course of which it was highlighted that all Elected Members were responsible for scrutiny within the Council and that open debate was necessary to ensure that effective decisions were being made. It was further highlighted that officers should consider the scrutiny process when creating policies to allow processes to be fully transparent.

The Council agreed to:-

- (a) note the findings and recommendations of the Council's Best Value Assurance Report;
- (b) approve the action plan listed in Appendix 2; and

- (c) approve the arrangements for monitoring progress on the action plan as referred to in the report.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2 (MAIN ISSUES REPORT) CONSULTATION

272. The Council considered a report by the Director of Environment providing an update in relation to the outcome of the consultation on the Main Issues Report (MIR) for Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2).

It was explained that a consultation exercise on the MIR was carried out between 30 November 2016 and 8 February 2017, which highlighted the vision, ideas and challenges for future development within East Renfrewshire and set out officers' suggested options and possible alternatives. A total of 692 responses were received from a variety of sources including consultants, key agencies and members of the public, with the majority of comments and objections focussing on Issue 2 – Managing and Enabling Growth.

The range of issues raised through the consultation were outlined and it was reported that the responses received would help to develop and shape the best strategy and mix of development sites for East Renfrewshire and would inform the proposed Plan programmed for summer 2018. The proposed Plan (LDP2) with recommendations would be submitted to the Council in due course.

Councillor Swift emphasised that the majority of representations on the MIR related to the possible development site at Broomburn Drive, as many local residents believed that any development would result in parking and access problems and would remove the only local green space. He referred to the Best Value Assurance report which had highlighted that the Council should listen closely to residents and take their views into consideration when making decisions.

The Council noted:-

- (a) the consultation responses received in relation to the Main Issues Report as summarised in Appendix 3; and
- (b) that further research and analysis would be carried out to inform the approach towards education needs and provision for the Proposed Plan, which would result in a delay in publication.

REVIEW OF BUDGETING

273. The Council considered a report by the Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer) explaining the main reasons for historic underspends and advising of past and future actions to align budgeted and actual spending.

It was explained that departmental expenditure and income were generally well controlled with only a small number of significant variances. A major contributor to underspends were centrally held, corporate budgets, as it was difficult to predict one-off costs associated with redundancy and early retirement, and variations in financial costs (loan charges) relating to the Council's capital plan. It was reported that actions had been taken prior to setting the 2017/18 budget to reduce underspends and further actions would be taken in 2018/19 and in future budget planning when the final underspend each year would be reviewed. It was

recognised that the Council's prudent historic approach to budget setting was no longer appropriate in view of the current financial outlook, and that a slightly less risk averse approach should be adopted.

The Council noted:-

- (a) the reasons for historic underspends;
- (b) the resulting actions taken in setting the 2017/18 revenue budget;
- (c) subsequent transfers of centrally held budgets during 2017/18;
- (d) the actions taken in compiling 2018/19 budget proposals; and
- (e) that consideration would be given to utilising reserves in future to permit contingency budgets to be minimised.

REVIEW OF TREASURY MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND POLICY STATEMENT

274. The Council considered a report by the Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer) advising of a review of the Treasury Management Practices and Policy Statement.

The report explained that a review of Treasury Management Practices and Policy Statement took place periodically and, following the most recent review, minor changes had been made to the document mainly relating to the Council's internal structure.

In response to comments made, the Head of Accountancy advised that part of the appraisal process for new capital bids included consideration of the capital costs and revenue consequences for each project. Any revenue costs associated with capital projects would be added to departmental budgets which would be considered at the same Council meeting as the capital plan.

The Council agreed to:-

- (a) note the content of the revised Treasury Management Practices and Treasury Management Policy Statement; and
- (b) approve the revised Treasury Management Practices and Treasury Management Policy Statement.

NAMING OF THE NEW COMMUNITY HUB IN AUCHENBACK

275. The Council considered a joint report by the Chief Officer – HSCP and Director of Education seeking agreement on a name for the new community hub in Auchenback, Barrhead.

The report explained that the vision for the community hub developed out of the Early Years Strategy which continued to address the needs of the most vulnerable children and families in East Renfrewshire. Work in the centre would continue to contribute to tackling deprivation, health inequalities and equity in educational experiences and outcomes, issues which had and continued to be championed by Sir Harry Burns, local resident and Freeman of East Renfrewshire.

It was therefore proposed that the centre be named in honour of Sir Harry Burns in recognition of his work locally, nationally and internationally

The Council agreed that the community hub in Auchenback, Barrhead be named The Sir Harry Burns Centre.

Resolution to Exclude Press and Public

At this point in the meeting, Provost Fletcher, seconded by Councillor Buchanan, proposed that the Council, in accordance with the provisions of Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, agree to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Act.

Councillor Macdonald, seconded by Councillor Aitken, proposed as an amendment that the press and public should not be excluded from the meeting.

Roll Call Vote

In accordance with Standing Order 32(b), Councillors Macdonald, Aitken, McLean and Swift requested a roll call vote.

On the roll being called, Provost Fletcher, and Councillors Bamforth, Buchanan, Convery, Devlin, Gilbert, Grant, Ireland, Lafferty, Merrick, Miller, O'Kane, Swift and Wallace voted for the motion.

Councillors Aitken, Macdonald and McLean voted for the amendment.

There being 14 votes for the motion and 3 votes for the amendment, the motion was declared carried and it was agreed:-

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 item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Act.

At this stage a number of members of the public refused to clear the gallery.

In accordance with Standing Order 15, the Provost adjourned the meeting for a short period to allow the necessary steps to be taken for the public gallery to be cleared.

Sederunt

Councillor Grant left the meeting at this point.

On reconvening, with the public gallery still not being cleared, the Provost moved that the meeting be further adjourned and reconvened in Meeting Room 5. This was agreed.

CHANGES TO COUNCIL'S ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

276. The Council considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive seeking approval for a proposed restructure of Heads of Service within the Environment Department and the Health and Social Care Partnership, with associated amendments to remits.

The report explained that a total of three Strategic Reviews had been undertaken within the Environment Department and a new management structure was now in place at the level below Head of Service. The Director of Environment had concluded that the department was now ready to implement the next phase of the restructure, including a senior management review at Head of Service level as part of which it was proposed to reduce the number of Heads of Service from 3 to 2. The current and proposed management structure along with details of the proposed new remits was appended to the report.

The report further explained that, due to rising demand and the need for unprecedented savings within the HSCP, a review of structures, processes and systems had been required. Alongside a number of service reviews, a review of the senior management structure of HSCP had been undertaken and a redesign of the management structure had taken place. This had resulted in proposed changes to the current structure and remits. The current and proposed management structure along with details of the new remits of the officers was appended to the report.

Following full discussion and having heard officers in response to a number of questions, the Council agreed to:-

- (a) approve the early retirement of the Head of Environment (Major Programmes and Projects) on the grounds of business efficiency, and the changes to the Head of Service remits within the management structure in the Environment Department;
- (b) approve the early retirement of the Head of Health and Community Care on the grounds of voluntary redundancy, the matching of the Chief Financial Officer into the Head of Service role, and the changes to the Head of Service remits within the HSCP management structure; and
- (c) delegate to the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Director of Environment and Chief Officer – HSCP to make the necessary arrangements.

PROVOST

MINUTE
of
LOCAL REVIEW BODY

Minute of Meeting held at 2.00pm in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 17 January 2018.

Present:

Councillor Annette Ireland (Chair)
Councillor Paul Aitken

Provost Jim Fletcher
Councillor Stewart Miller

Councillor Ireland in the Chair

Attending:

Graham Shankland, Principal Business Intelligence Officer (Planning Adviser); Siobhan Wilson, Solicitor (Legal Adviser); and Paul O’Neil, Committee Services Officer (Clerk).

Apologies:

Councillors Angela Convery; Betty Cunningham (Vice Chair); and Jim McLean.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

277. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

NOTICE OF REVIEW – REVIEW 2017/25 – ERECTION OF TWO STOREY SIDE EXTENSION INCLUDING INCREASE IN RIDGE HEIGHT AT 2 WEAVER AVENUE, NEWTON MEARNS (REF NO: 2017/0551/TP)

278. The Local Review Body considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive, relative to a ‘Notice of Review’ submitted by Mr and Mrs Taylor against the decision taken by officers to refuse planning permission in respect of the erection of a two storey side extension including increase in ridge height at 2 Weaver Avenue, Newton Mearns.

The decision had been made in accordance with the Council’s Scheme of Delegation made in terms of Section 43A of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended.

In accordance with the decision taken at the meeting on 10 August 2016, the Local Review Body had carried out an unaccompanied site inspection of the application site immediately prior to the meeting.

Having been advised that the applicants had submitted new evidence which was not before the Appointed Officer at the time the determination of the application was made and having

noted the procedure that required to be followed should the new information be taken into account, the Local Review Body decided not to give consideration to the new information in the determination of the review.

At this stage, the Local Review Body, having considered the information previously circulated, agreed that it had sufficient information to determine the review without further procedure.

Following discussion, it was agreed to uphold the decision of the Appointed Officer as set out in the decision notice of 15 September 2017 and refuse planning permission.

NOTICE OF REVIEW – REVIEW 2017/26 – ERECTION OF STORAGE BUILDING AT SIDE AT 1 SEYTON COURT, SEYTON AVENUE, GIFFNOCK (REF NO: 2017/0487/TP)

279. The Local Review Body considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive, relative to a 'Notice of Review' submitted by Mr Norman Innes against the decision taken by officers to refuse planning permission in respect of the erection of a storage building at the side of 1 Seyton Court, Seyton Avenue, Giffnock.

The decision had been made in accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation made in terms of Section 43A of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended.

In accordance with the decision taken at the meeting on 10 August 2016, the Local Review Body had carried out an unaccompanied site inspection of the application site immediately prior to the meeting.

The Local Review Body having considered the information previously circulated agreed that it had sufficient information to determine the review without further procedure.

Following discussion, Councillor Ireland, seconded by Councillor Miller, moved to uphold the decision of the Appointed Officer as set out in the decision notice of 8 September 2017 and refuse planning permission.

Councillor Aitken, seconded by Provost Fletcher, moved as an amendment to overturn the decision of the Appointed Officer as detailed in the decision notice of 8 September 2017 and grant planning permission, subject to a condition being attached to the consent requiring the applicant to carry out future tree planting arrangements at the site.

On a vote being taken, 2 Members voted for the motion and 2 Members voted for the amendment. There being an equality of votes cast, in accordance with Standing Order 32(c) the Chair had a casting vote which she cast in favour of the motion.

The motion was accordingly declared carried and it was agreed that the Local Review Body uphold the decision of the Appointed Officer as set out in the decision notice of 8 September 2017 and refuse planning permission.

MINUTE
of
LICENSING COMMITTEE

Minute of Meeting held at 2.00pm in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Eastwood Park, Giffnock, on 23 January 2018.

Present:

Councillor Angela Convery (Chair)	Councillor David Macdonald
Councillor Betty Cunningham (Vice Chair)	Councillor Stewart Miller
Councillor Alan Lafferty	

Councillor Convery in the Chair

Attending:

Jacqui McCusker, Senior Solicitor; Brian Kilpatrick, Civic Government Enforcement Officer; and Jennifer Graham, Committee Services Officer.

Also Attending:

Inspector Sean Ramsay and Sergeant Scott Brown, Police Scotland (Items 281 to 283 only).

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

280. 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 Items 281 to 285 below on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 6 and 14 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Act.

PRIVATE HIRE CAR DRIVER'S LICENCE – APPLICATION FOR RENEWAL

281. The committee considered a report by the Chief Officer - Legal & Procurement regarding an application for the renewal of a Private Hire Car Driver's Licence (Agenda Item 3 refers). The applicant was present. Inspector Ramsay and Sergeant Brown representing the Chief Constable, who had made an objection in respect of the application, were also present.

The report explained that in determining the application it would be for the committee to decide what weight it wished to attach to the objection by the Chief Constable and its relevance to the type of licence being applied for.

Sergeant Brown was heard in respect of the objection submitted by the Chief Constable and in response to questions from Members.

The applicant was then heard in respect of the application and in response to questions from Members.

The committee having taken account of the submission by the applicant, his previous convictions, their seriousness and relevance to the licence being applied for, and also having taken account of the objection by the Chief Constable, agreed that the application be refused on the grounds that the applicant was not a fit and proper person to be the holder of such a licence by virtue of his previous convictions.

PRIVATE HIRE CAR DRIVER'S LICENCE – REQUEST FOR SUSPENSION

282. The committee considered a report by the Chief Officer - Legal & Procurement relative to a request from the Chief Constable for the suspension of a Private Hire Car Driver's Licence on the grounds that the licensee was no longer a fit and proper person to be the holder of a licence by virtue of having been charged with a number of offences (Agenda Item 4 refers). The licensee was present.

Sergeant Brown, representing the Chief Constable who had requested the suspension, was heard in respect of the request, in the course of which he advised that the applicant's court date had been delayed until 8 February 2018.

The applicant was then heard in respect of the incident which had led to the request for suspension and in response to questions from Members.

The committee agreed to a short adjournment to consider the matter.

On reconvening, the committee agreed to continue consideration of the application to a future meeting to allow the outcome of the applicant's forthcoming court case to be known.

PRIVATE HIRE CAR DRIVER'S LICENCE – REQUEST FOR SUSPENSION

283. The committee considered a report by the Chief Officer - Legal & Procurement relative to a request from the Chief Constable for the suspension of a Private Hire Car Driver's Licence on the grounds that the licensee was no longer a fit and proper person to be the holder of a licence by virtue of having been charged with an offence (Agenda Item 5 refers). The licensee was present together with his representative Mr McCormack.

Sergeant Brown, representing the Chief Constable who had requested the suspension, was heard in respect of the request and in response to questions from Members.

Mr McCormack and the applicant were then heard in respect of the incident which had led to the request for suspension and in response to questions from Members.

The committee agreed to a short adjournment to consider the matter.

On reconvening, the committee agreed not to suspend the licence but advised the licensee that he must immediately contact the Council if he was later found guilty of any offence in court.

Sederunt

Inspector Ramsay and Sergeant Brown left the meeting at this point.

TAXI LICENCE – APPLICATION FOR GRANT

284. The committee considered a report by the Chief Officer - Legal & Procurement regarding an application for the grant of a Taxi Licence where the vehicle was more than 5 years old (Agenda Item 6 refers). It was reported that East Renfrewshire's Taxi Licensing Rules stated that if a new vehicle licence rather than a licence for renewal was applied for, the vehicle could not be older than 5 years from the date of registration. The applicant's vehicle was more than 5 years old. The applicant was present together with his representative Mr Kyle.

Mr Kyle explained that the applicant had failed to renew his licence in October 2017 due to his operator Clarkston Taxis not accurately recording the vehicle licence renewal and vehicle inspection dates on their system. The dates for both had been noted as 3 February 2018 which was only the vehicle inspection date. The vehicle licence renewal had had been 22 October 2017. By the time this discrepancy had been detected, the applicant was too late to apply for a renewal of his vehicle licence and required to apply for his Taxi licence as a new application. If he had applied for a renewal in time he would have been permitted to register a vehicle more than 5 years old. The Civic Government Enforcement Officer confirmed that this explanation was accurate. The applicant and his representative were then heard in response to questions from Members.

Having heard Councillor Macdonald suggest that consideration be given to sending renewal reminders to licensees in future to prevent this error from happening again, the committee agreed that the licence be granted for a period of 1 year subject to standard terms and conditions.

PRIVATE HIRE CAR DRIVER'S LICENCE – REQUEST FOR SUSPENSION

285. The committee considered a report by the Chief Officer - Legal & Procurement requesting further suspension of a Private Hire Car Driver's Licence under Paragraph 11 of Schedule 1 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 (Agenda Item 7 refers). The applicant was present.

It was reported that the licence had been suspended on 3 January 2018 in terms of Paragraph 12 of Schedule 1 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982, in the interests of public safety, and a request was being made to continue the suspension under Paragraph 11 of the Act.

A report was submitted by the Civic Government Enforcement Officer providing details of an incident which had taken place, following which a complaint had been made against the licensee. The Civic Government Enforcement Officer was heard further regarding the report, in the course of which he advised that he had been unable to meet with the complainant to

enable her to provide a statement in support of her complaint. He further advised that Police Scotland were awaiting the results of forensic tests prior to deciding how to proceed with the case.

The applicant was then heard in respect of the complaint and in response to questions from Members.

The committee agreed:-

- (a) to defer the matter to allow further information to be provided from the complainant and Police Scotland; and
- (b) that the suspension under Paragraph 12 remain in place until all necessary information was available to enable consideration of a suspension under Paragraph 11.

Sederunt

The meeting was opened to the press and public at this point.

EQUALITY ACT 2010 – TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE CAR LICENCES

286. The committee considered a report by the Chief Officer - Legal & Procurement seeking a decision on whether or not East Renfrewshire Council should maintain a list of wheelchair accessible vehicles on its website in terms of Section 167 of the Equality Act 2010 and seeking delegated powers to allow officers to deal with requests for exemption certificates under sections 166 and 169 of the Act.

Having heard the Senior Solicitor explain the background to the report and following discussion, the committee agreed:-

- (a) that the Chief Officer - Legal & Procurement produce and maintain an up-to-date list of wheelchair accessible vehicles;
- (b) that the above list be published on the East Renfrewshire Council and East Renfrewshire Disability Action (ERDA) websites; and
- (c) not to grant delegated powers to the Chief Officer - Legal & Procurement or the Principal Solicitor to determine exemption certificates under sections 166 and 169 of the Equality Act 2010.

CHAIR

MINUTE
of
CABINET

Minute of Meeting held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 25 January 2018.

Present:

Councillor Tony Buchanan (Leader)	Councillor Danny Devlin
Councillor Paul O’Kane (Deputy Leader)	Councillor Alan Lafferty
Councillor Caroline Bamforth	Councillor Colm Merrick

Councillor Buchanan, Leader, in the Chair

Attending:

Lorraine McMillan, Chief Executive; Caroline Innes, Deputy Chief Executive; Mhairi Shaw, Director of Education; Andy Cahill, Director of Environment; Margaret McCrossan, Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer); Fiona Morrison, Head of Education Services (Provision and Resources); Phil Daws, Head of Environment (Strategic Services); Murray Husband, Head of ICT and Digital Enablement; and Paul O’Neil, Committee Services Officer.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

287. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

DEVOLVED SCHOOL MANAGEMENT – CARRY-FORWARD PROPOSAL

288. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Education, seeking approval, subject to certain conditions, to allow Head Teachers on behalf of their school/early years centre to carry-forward Devolved School Management (DSM) budget underspends up to a maximum level and thereby enhance the flexibility within DSM budgets. Details of the proposed categorisation of budget lines were appended to the report.

Whilst noting that DSM had been operating since 1993, and having noted the changing landscape in education governance that would impact on DSM, the report proposed that with immediate effect a change to the administration of DSM in East Renfrewshire be introduced which would allow schools to carry-forward budget underspends within an agreed tolerance, subject to certain conditions being met.

The report provided details of the DSM carry-forward principles highlighting that for each school the DSM budget would comprise budget lines that would be controllable by the Head Teacher who had flexibility in determining their use and would be able to transfer monies between budget headings and a non-DSM budget which would comprise other budget lines

that supported the running of the school but over which the Head Teacher had little or no influence.

Details of the conditions that Head Teachers required to meet before underspends could be carried forward were outlined in the report.

The report explained that the proposal to introduce an element of carry-forward of unspent resources from schools' DSM budgets for use by Head Teachers would empower them to better meet local needs and deliver the best possible outcomes for their learners. Furthermore, it would increase the flexibility that Head Teachers would have helping to maximise available resources at their disposal, which was particularly important at times of significant financial restraint.

Whilst noting that the proposal would be an interim change to DSM procedures, since there would likely be further changes as a consequence of evolving national developments on governance, funding, the Head Teachers' charter etc., that would impact on the administration of DSM, the report indicated that once the impact was known the DSM procedures would be reviewed to ensure they met evolving requirements of Head Teachers in this respect.

The Cabinet agreed:-

- (a) to approve with immediate effect a change to the administration of DSM in East Renfrewshire to allow schools to carry-forward budget underspends within an agreed tolerance and subject to certain conditions as outlined in the report being met; and
- (b) that it be remitted to the Director of Education to review DSM procedures to ensure they meet evolving requirements of Head Teachers and to reflect the outcome of national developments as they impacted on DSM.

MOBILE DEVICE POLICY

289. The Cabinet considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive, seeking approval of the revised Mobile Device Policy for the Council which had been reviewed and modernised to reflect the changing use and reliance on mobile devices across the Council, it being noted that the proposed policy would apply to both officers and Elected Members.

The report explained that the Council's existing Mobile Device Policy was written, approved and published in 2011 and was a key element in the drive towards new ways of working and ensuring Council staff and Elected Members were able to safely and properly use mobile devices. However, since being approved, mobile device technology had changed significantly with the vast array of phones, smartphones, tablets and laptops now being mainstream and in many cases more prevalent than more traditional desktop equipment.

Whilst noting that the policy had been updated to reflect changes in device technology and increased Council reliance on these devices, the report indicated that the policy would now enter a regular review cycle to retain its currency and relevance to the Council and that in addition, clarity had been provided on a number of policy positions whilst reducing the restrictions on devices and personal use.

The Cabinet agreed to approve the new Mobile Device Policy it being noted that the policy would apply to both officers and Elected Members.

COUNCIL HOUSE BUILDING PROGRAMME

290. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Council of 10 November 2016 (Page 2100, Item 2255 refers) when it was agreed amongst other things to approve in principle, and subject to consultation, the proposal to build up to 120 new Council homes over the following 3 to 5 years which would be owned and managed by the Council, the Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment, seeking approval in principle for the Council to build and thereafter manage a further 120 new Council houses over the next 3-5 years, and to consult on the proposal as required by the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987.

The report highlighted that a review of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) business plan with external expert advice had confirmed that financial capacity existed to increase the currently agreed Council house building programme from 120 houses to 240 houses in order to help address ongoing housing need in the area. Specific consultation on individual sites would take place in the future as more detailed proposals were drafted.

The Cabinet:-

- (a) approved in principle and subject to consultation, the proposal to build a further 120 new Council houses in the next 3-5 years to be owned and managed by the Council; and
- (b) noted the intention to consult upon the proposals as outlined in the report.

ESTIMATED REVENUE BUDGET OUT-TURN 2017/18

291. The Cabinet considered a report by the Chief Financial Officer, detailing the estimated projected revenue out-turn for 2017/18 and providing details of the expected year end variances, together with summary cost information for each of the undernoted services as at 10 November 2017:-

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

Whilst noting that as at 10 November 2017, the estimated year-end position showed a net favourable variance on net expenditure of £4,280,000 based on current information, the report highlighted that for General Fund services the projected underspend was £4,222,000. Furthermore, Council Tax collection had been higher than budgeted, with additional income of £700,000 now anticipated, bringing the total forecast underspend on General Fund services to £4,922,000.

However, it was noted that a number of operational variances required management action to ensure that departmental expenditure would be in line with budget at the end of the financial year. At this time, it was expected that management action would lead to all overspends being recovered, that all underspends were consolidated wherever possible and that spending up to budget levels did not take place.

The Cabinet, having noted the reported probable out-turn position, agreed that:-

- (a) the service virements and operational adjustments be approved;
- (b) management action be taken to remedy the forecast overspend in Environment – Support; and
- (c) all departments continue to closely monitor their probable out-turn position.

CHAIR

MINUTE
of
AUDIT & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minute of Meeting held at 2.00pm in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 25 January 2018.

Present:

Councillor Stewart Miller (Chair)
Councillor Barbara Grant (Vice Chair)
Provost Jim Fletcher
Councillor Charlie Gilbert

Councillor Annette Ireland
Councillor David Macdonald
Councillor Jim Swift

Councillor Miller in the Chair

Attending:

Margaret McCrossan, Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer); Louise Pringle, Head of Business Change and Revenues; Michelle Blair, Chief Auditor; Linda Hutchison, Clerk to the Committee; and Ron Leitch, Committee Services Officer.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

292. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

CHAIR'S REPORT

293. The following matters were discussed during the Chair's report:-

(i) Committee Membership etc

Councillor Miller welcomed Councillor Swift who had been appointed to the committee following the resignation of Councillor Aitken; and the Head of Accountancy who would be attending future meetings as an advisor.

(ii) Training and Related Issues

Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 17 August 2017 (Page 92, Item 101 refers), when the value of training for all Elected Members on scrutiny related issues, including those who served on this committee, was discussed, Councillor Miller referred to the recent notification all Elected Members had received about forthcoming training for them in February and March on essential scrutiny skills, risk management and treasury management, encouraging as many as possible to attend these important sessions.

He reported that a further session was also being arranged on the roles of internal and external audit in mid to late April, clarifying that all Members would be contacted further about this in due course.

(iii) Specialisation Arrangements for Dealing with External and Internal Audit Reports

Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 17 August 2017 (Page 92, Item 101 refers) when specialisation arrangements for dealing with various external and internal audit reports had been approved, Councillor Miller reiterated that although these arrangements had been put in place all members of the committee received copies of the reports and could raise issues about them, for example with those leading on them on behalf of the committee.

Arising from Councillor Aitken's resignation from the committee, it was proposed that Councillor Swift take over the remit he had held for Corporate and Community Services Department issues working with Councillor Macdonald. More generally, it was also proposed that the specialisation arrangements be reviewed after the summer to establish if there was considered to be a need to make any changes to them after their first full year of operation.

On a related issue, Councillor Miller reminded Members to complete and return to the Clerk the pro-formas she issued about such reports, confirming that immediately after feedback on the local position had been considered by the committee would be the ideal time.

(iv) Questions Relating to Reports

Councillor Miller referred to the wide range of reports submitted to the committee, commenting that there would be times when detailed work was being progressed when he would ask the Clerk to seek Elected Members' views on and collate lists of detailed questions they might wish to ask on specific issues.

More generally, having acknowledged that it may be the case that Members would only think of some questions on reports as they were under consideration at meetings, he highlighted that it would be helpful and ensure comprehensive feedback could be sought from and provided by officers at meetings if, after each agenda was issued, officers received advance notification of some issues Members might wish to raise. He requested that Members make both himself and the Clerk aware of any such issues as early as possible before the meetings to allow contact to be made with the relevant officers and help them prepare.

(v) Future Work to be Progressed by Committee

Councillor Miller advised Members that suggestions for future work to be progressed by the committee would be sought from them in the weeks ahead enabling a report on this to be considered at a future meeting. He explained that, meanwhile, Members of the committee had suggested that reports be sought on two issues, seeking agreement to do so.

In further clarification, regarding the Glasgow City Region City Deal, he reported that Councillor Swift had suggested seeking a report on some issues

relating to the allocation of responsibilities to staff, adherence to related procedures and associated pay issues in East Renfrewshire on which he held some potential concerns. Regarding gritting and some related concerns raised regarding the lack of gritting of some areas, he explained that Councillor Grant had proposed seeking a report on the position and how it was felt the service might be delivered in future.

The committee agreed:-

- (a) regarding the specialisation arrangements for dealing with external and internal audit reports, that Councillor Swift lead on Corporate and Community Services Department issues with Councillor Macdonald;
- (b) more generally that the specialisation arrangements be reviewed after the summer following their first full year of operation;
- (c) that a report be sought on issues relating to the allocation of responsibilities to staff, adherence to related procedures and associated pay issues in East Renfrewshire Council in relation to the Glasgow City Region City Deal;
- (d) that a report be sought on the current position on gritting and how the service might be delivered in future; and
- (e) otherwise, to note the report.

COUNCIL TAX COLLECTION

294. The committee considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive providing details of a recent issue that affected Council Tax collection and an update on actions taken, both in response to the event and subsequently, to ensure that the issue would not be repeated.

The report commented on the Council's strong track record in Council Tax collection, associated payment methods and the long-established associated processes and procedures that were implemented by experienced staff and had been subject to regular audit in respect of which no issues had ever been highlighted. The report referred to the internal processing error that occurred in December resulting in Council Tax direct debit payments being taken from residents' accounts 6 days earlier than they should have been affecting 12,880 accounts. Reference was made to the related investigation and findings, how the issue was attributable to human error, and immediate and key actions taken to address the specific issue that had occurred. Reference was also made to the cause of the issue, lessons learned, and action being taken to prevent the issue from happening again. Related financial implications, potential consequences for customers and the next steps being taken were summarised. It was confirmed that the Council had apologised unreservedly for the error and would reimburse any bank charges incurred by residents as a result of it.

Having heard the Head of Business Change and Revenues comment on key aspects of the report, Councillor Miller referred to the potential financial impact on residents.

Responding to Councillor Grant who referred to the seriousness of the issue, commented on related assurances required and sought an update on the number of residents reporting they were in difficulty, the Head of Business Change and Revenues clarified that, to date, 33 contacts had been received by either Customer First or the Council Tax team, clarifying that no further requests for recompense had been received.

Having expressed the view that the matter had been taken seriously and welcomed the apology provided, Councillor Ireland asked if the software provider's original position on the date default issue referred to in report had changed. The Head of Business Change and Revenues explained that the supplier was unwilling to change this aspect of the system, but that other steps had been taken locally to prevent a recurrence of the error.

Provost Fletcher welcomed the steps taken regarding the issue that had occurred following which, supported by Councillor Macdonald, he questioned the need for as many as 5 Council Tax payment date choices to be offered each month, suggesting this increased the likelihood of errors and that further automation to reduce scope for human error would be helpful. Councillor Swift supported giving as many options as required to accommodate individuals' circumstances but exploring further automation also. The Head of Business Change and Revenues clarified that the 5 options were to accommodate as many residents as possible and help maximise the Council Tax collection rate regarding which the Council was ranked 3rd in Scotland, but undertook to discuss the suggestions with her team.

In reply to Councillor Macdonald, the Head of Business Change and Revenues referred to requests made to cover costs incurred and the cost of reimbursing residents. The Head of Accountancy confirmed that the additional interest accrued by the Council linked to the early receipt of the payments had been calculated to be £81 (approximately 0.6 pence per household), a conclusion having been reached that reimbursement of this amount to each household was not cost-effective.

Councillor Macdonald expressed the view that there were parallels between the issue under consideration and a matter the committee had discussed previously on creditors in terms of human error and a supervisory check failing to identify an issue, asking at what stage in this kind of circumstance action should be considered against staff. Issues referred to by the Head of Business Change and Revenues included the different team involved; the time the process followed had been in place; regular audits undertaken and the positive findings of these; aspects of the investigation and related issues; the experience of staff involved; the lack of a pattern of errors by individuals or the team; and the monitoring and performance management arrangements the Council had in place.

Having heard Councillor Miller welcome that Elected Members had been advised quickly of the issue, Councillor Macdonald referred to the impact such an incident could potentially have on an individual's credit rating and their ability to make other payments for example. Councillor Swift commented that although the incident had not impacted seriously on residents on this occasion it had had potential to do so, expressing the view that it had further damaged the Council's reputation and made it look less competent than it should. He referred also to the need for protocols to be followed, reiterating that reducing scope for human intervention could be helpful.

In reply to Councillor Swift, the Chief Auditor commented that all departments were looking at automation, that potential for some human error always remained which could be addressed to an extent by checks and, supported by the Head of Business Change and Revenues, that lessons for the future had been learned from both the creditors and Council Tax issues. The Head of Business Change and Revenues also referred to the types of

checks introduced; the greater focus placed until now on improving customers' experience on Council Tax payments; the update on creditors to be submitted to the next meeting; automation and digitalisation being pursued across departments and related complexities; and IT infrastructure and related interfaces and improvements on aspects of Council business.

In reply to Councillor Macdonald, the Head of Business Change and Revenues clarified the variety of methods employed by the Council to advise residents of the Council Tax situation and apologise for any inconvenience or problem caused, confirming that any individual who had made contact had received an individual apology.

The committee agreed to note the update on the recent issue with Council Tax collection and the steps taken in response.

NATIONAL EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORT - SELF-DIRECTED SUPPORT – 2017 PROGRESS REPORT

295. The committee considered a report by the Clerk on the publication by Audit Scotland of a report entitled *Self-Directed Support – 2017 Progress Report* which under the committee's specialisation arrangements had been sent to Provost Fletcher and Councillor Gilbert for review. The Chief Officer, Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) had been asked to provide comments and a copy of her feedback was attached to the report.

Having referred to the 10-year Self-Directed Support (SDS) strategy introduced jointly by the Scottish Government and COSLA in 2010, related legislation giving councils responsibility from April 2014 for offering people four options on the management of their social care, and related issues, the report explained that Audit Scotland had published a report in 2014 on early progress on implementing the strategy and how ready councils had been for the Social Care (Self-Directed Support) Act 2013.

The aim of the follow-up audit had been to establish whether councils, integration authorities and the Scottish Government had made sufficient progress in implementing SDS to achieve its strategic aims. It had set out to answer 4 key questions regarding the implementation process, such as about what factors were supporting or impeding effective implementation of SDS. Having summarised the findings across Scotland and clarified that some of the recommendations made were for the Scottish Government and COSLA to implement, it was explained that the majority of recommendations were for authorities including Integration Joint Boards and HSCPs. A list of those recommendations and related local actions was attached to the report.

Referring to the national report, Councillor Grant, supported by Councillor Ireland, proposed seeking further local statistics on SDS for East Renfrewshire. The Clerk confirmed that she could seek this from the Chief Officer, HSCP. In addition, Councillor Grant acknowledged the challenges of recruiting and retaining social work staff referred to in the report.

Councillor Swift referred to a range of issues including discussions he had had with the Chief Officer HSCP several years ago and recently on SDS; levels of SDS locally which remained low but were improving and related issues and plans; and a local SDS group which was in place. Councillor Ireland welcomed that a SDS group was in place and that it provided a vehicle through which views could be expressed. Amongst other things, Provost Fletcher referred to the contribution those from other countries made to the provision of care; the importance of organisations engaged to provide care paying the Living Wage to help retain

staff; the implications for care costs associated with an ageing population; and the importance of SDS being more efficient and cost effective than other service delivery options.

The committee agreed:-

- (a) that the Chief Officer, HSCP provide further statistical information on SDS within East Renfrewshire and that it be circulated by the Clerk on receipt; and

- (b) to note the report, including the local position as detailed in Appendix 1 and related comments made.

INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2017/18

296. The committee considered a report by the Chief Auditor regarding progress made on the implementation of the 2017/18 Internal Audit Plan from 1 October to 31 December 2017. The report confirmed the number of reports issued during the quarter and that satisfactory management responses had been received in all cases, including regarding three recommendations which had not been accepted by management regarding which the explanations provided had been accepted. Reference was also made to the quarterly performance indicators (PIs) for the section.

Whilst presenting her report, the Chief Auditor highlighted that 2 of the PIs were not being met at present due to the impact of additional, unplanned audit work that had required to be carried out and also work associated with responding to a number of Freedom of Information requests. She added that effort would be made to address the position on the PIs in question and that she was not proposing to delete any planned audits at present. She referred to the audit report on creditors and associated management response she had provided since the last meeting and which had been circulated to the committee.

Having confirmed that 67% of planned contingency time for the year had been used, the Chief Auditor referred to internal audit work undertaken on a possible breach of contract procedures which resulted in Best Value not being achieved, lack of segregation of duties and lack of clarity of costs invoiced to the Council and how these agreed to contract rates. She clarified that the management response was due in 4 weeks which would be referred to further in due course. Having added that she was limited in what she could say about the findings at present as they might result in disciplinary action being taken, she referred to the risk categorisation into which the various recommendations made had fallen and the nature of some of the conclusions reached. She added that an anonymous allegation had also been received on an unrelated matter earlier in the week which was starting to be examined.

Having heard Councillor Miller remind Members that copies of audit reports could be requested, the Chief Auditor confirmed that she would send any such reports to the Clerk for circulation. Regarding the development of the next Internal Audit 5 year plan, she confirmed that she would seek views on it from Elected Members which was in keeping with past practice. More generally, she added that if the committee wished more or less detail in the reports she prepared and submitted to it she would be happy to be approached about and consider this.

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

CHAIR

MINUTE
of
EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Minute of Meeting held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 1 February 2018.

Present:

Councillor Paul O’Kane (Chair)	Councillor Alan Lafferty
Councillor Colm Merrick (Vice Chair)	Dr Frank Angell
Councillor Caroline Bamforth	Mr Des Morris
Councillor Charlie Gilbert	

Councillor O’Kane in the Chair

Attending:

Mhairi Shaw, Director of Education; Janice Collins, Head of Education Services (Equality and Equity); Mark Ratter, Head of Education Services (Quality Improvement and Performance); Fiona Morrison, Head of Education Services (Provision and Resources); Tracy Morton, Education Senior Manager; and Jennifer Graham, Committee Services Officer.

Also Attending:

Ms Jannette Black, Headteacher, Hillview Primary School.

Apologies:

Councillors Tony Buchanan (Leader) and Jim Swift; and Ms Dorothy Graham.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

297. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

PROGRESS OF HILLVIEW PRIMARY SCHOOL IN ADDRESSING AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT FROM EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT

298. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 30 March 2017 (Page 2282, Item 2449 refers), when it was agreed that the Director of Education submit a report on the school’s progress to the committee in March 2018, the committee considered a report by the Director of Education advising of progress made in Hillview Primary School (formerly known as Springhill and Auchenback Primary School) in addressing the recommendations contained in the report by Education Scotland published in February 2017.

The report referred to areas of improvement which had been outlined by Education Scotland and agreed with the school and Education Department. An action plan for improvement had subsequently been developed and the Quality Improvement Team had worked closely with the school to implement this.

The interim progress report outlined a number of key strengths within the school, highlighting that parents were very positive about the ethos of the school and had embraced the new identity of Hillview Primary. The Head of Education Services (Quality Improvement and Performance) reported that the school had made a promising start in meeting the recommendations from the Education Scotland report and would continue to work with the Quality Improvement Team to further address the recommendations. This work would form the basis of the school's Improvement Plan for sessions 2017/18 and 2018/19.

In response to comments and questions from Members, the Head of Education Services (Quality Improvement and Performance) reported that leadership within the school was a key element of the improvement process and all staff had embraced the changes which had been introduced. Referring to comments made about the possibility of using the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) to tackle mental health issues in schools, the Director of Education advised that each school could decide what their PEF allocation would be used for and further information regarding this would be submitted to the Education Committee in due course. The Head of Education Services (Equality and Equity) added that child mental health issues were tackled through the Children's Services Plan and children's health and wellbeing was also discussed at meetings of the Improving Outcomes for Children and Young People Group which included officers from the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP). The Director of Education highlighted that many teachers had undertaken training in Mental Health First Aid to assist pupils with mental health issues within schools.

Ms Black, Head Teacher, explained that everyone connected with the school was pleased with the report which recognised the achievements which had already been made and commended the hard work of staff, pupils, parents, the wider community, the Education Department Directorate, and the Quality Improvement Team. She also thanked the Barrhead Cluster Head Teachers for their support and advice. She stated that the school had gone through a challenging period during the amalgamation but was pleased about the many improvements which had been made during the previous two and a half years and welcomed the appointment of a new Depute Head Teacher who was proving to be an excellent addition to the leadership team.

Having heard Councillor O'Kane, on behalf of the committee, congratulate all those associated with the improvements which had been made, the committee agreed to:-

- (a) note the contents of the Education Scotland follow-through report on Hillview Primary School; and,
- (b) invite the Director of Education to carry out a further follow-through review of Hillview Primary School within 12 months and bring the resulting report to Education Committee in June 2019.

STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2016/17

299. The committee considered a report by the Director of Education advising of the proposed content of the Education Department's 2016/17 Standards and Quality Report, a copy of which accompanied the report.

Having set out the legislative obligations on local authorities to produce and publish annually a Local Improvement Plan which detailed how schools and services would continuously improve, and based on this prepare a Standards and Quality Report detailing how improvements in provision had been sought and achieved, the report outlined the progress made by the Education Department and its schools and services in taking forward the improvement agenda set out in the Local Improvement Plan.

The report explained that the department had undertaken a self-evaluation exercise which had informed the draft report and helped outline the steps to be included in the Local Improvement Plan which was the subject of a separate report to the committee. The draft Standards and Quality Report highlighted the very good and excellent standards achieved by the department, its schools and services, including details of some of the activities which had been undertaken during the 2016/17 school session and their impact on stakeholders. Following feedback, the format of the report had been designed to provide a concise, visual and high level summary of progress made with the Local Improvement Plan.

It was proposed to issue the report electronically to all parents with children attending East Renfrewshire schools or Early Learning and Childcare centres and it would be available to view online or download from the Council's website. A limited number of published copies would be available in all libraries, education, sports and cultural centres, and Council buildings.

Having heard a number of Members commend the Education Department on an excellent report, the committee agreed to:-

- (a) approve the 2016/17 Standards and Quality Report; and
- (b) authorise the Director of Education to take the necessary steps to produce and issue copies of the report for parents.

LOCAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2018-2021

300. The committee considered a report by the Director of Education seeking approval for the Education Department's Local Improvement Plan 2018-2021.

The report explained that the plan was designed to give an indication of the department's key areas for improvement over the next three years and was updated annually to take account of changing priorities. Areas of improvement were outlined and priorities would be developed through self-evaluation and information gathered through external evaluations and the implementation of the plan.

In response to comments from Members, the Head of Education Services (Equality and Equity) advised that Parent Councils were currently part of the legislative framework and parents would continue to be encouraged to make decisions within schools through these bodies. However, there was also a need to improve support for all parents to allow them to support their child's learning and the Parental Engagement Strategy would provide guidance on this. In response to comments about the recruitment and retention of head teachers, the Director of Education referred to the difficulties encountered across Scotland and the need to look at ways to deal with this both nationally and locally. She advised that various programmes to encourage development had been introduced, including the Aspiring Leaders Programme, and the introduction of shadowing and mentoring programmes for future leaders had been discussed at the Glasgow Regional Education Improvement Collaborative (the West Partnership) which had recently been established. She added that

Trade Unions were also working closely with local authorities to produce and support future leaders.

The committee agreed to approve the Local Improvement Plan 2018-2021.

GLASGOW CITY REGIONAL EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT COLLABORATIVE INITIAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

301. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Council of 13 September 2017 (Page 125, Item 136 refers), when the involvement of the Council in the governance structure approved by the Glasgow City Region Cabinet which would ensure local democratic accountability for education functions whilst maximising the benefits of collaboration was approved, the committee considered a report by the Director of Education on the initial Improvement Plan of the Glasgow City Regional Education Improvement Collaborative (locally known as the West Partnership).

It had been agreed that the eight partner authorities would work with the West Partnership to develop the first annual regional plan and there would be a clear focus on maintaining local democratic accountability and developing a regional plan which would complement Local Improvement Plans. Regular meetings had taken place to develop the first Regional Improvement Plan and Terms of Reference and the appointment of a Convener of the Regional Education Committee had been agreed at the first meeting of the Elected Member group. Links between the Local and Regional Improvement Plan were also highlighted.

Following comments from members, Councillor O’Kane highlighted that members of the Partnership had expressed a willingness to collaborate and share best practice across the region while making a strong case for each local authority’s views to be heard during the Education (Scotland) Bill consultation.

The committee agreed to:-

- (a) note the initial Improvement Plan of the West Partnership and its relationship to the Council’s Education Local Improvement Plan; and
- (b) instruct the Director of Education to bring regular reports on its progress and impact to future meetings.

EARLY YEARS PUPIL EQUITY FUND REVIEW

302. The committee considered a report by the Director of Education providing progress on the implementation of the Early Years Pupil Equity Fund.

The report explained that funding had been allocated by the Scottish Government to every primary, secondary and special school in 2017/18 with an expectation that the funding would be used to address the poverty related attainment gap. Although this funding did not directly benefit the Early Years sector, funding from the Council had been combined to support the prevention and early intervention agenda in 2017/18.

The report outlined steps which had been taken to implement East Renfrewshire’s Early Years Pupil Equity Fund including formation of an Early Years Literacy Team; development of the Reaching Out Project; and officer secondments to the roles of Early Years Physical Education Officer and Parental Engagement Officer.

Having heard officers highlight that an element of outdoor learning was extremely beneficial at all stages of a child's education from early years to secondary, the committee agreed to note the report.

CHAIR

MINUTE

of

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Minute of Meeting held at 2.00pm in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 14 February 2018.

Present:

Councillor Annette Ireland (Chair)
Councillor Betty Cunningham (Vice Chair)
Councillor Paul Aitken
Councillor Angela Convery

Provost Jim Fletcher
Councillor Stewart Miller
Councillor Jim McLean

Councillor Ireland in the Chair

Attending:

Sean McDaid, Principal Planner; and Ian Walker, Senior Planner, Development Management; Graham Shankland, Principal Business Intelligence Officer, Business Intelligence Team; and Paul O'Neil, Committee Services Officer.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

303. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

NOTIFICATION OF PLANNING APPEALS AND APPEAL DECISIONS

304. The committee considered and noted a report by the Director of Environment, advising of the intimation by the Directorate for Planning and Environmental Appeals (DEPA) of one new appeal that had been lodged against the committee's decision to refuse planning permission and the outcome of three appeal decisions, two which the Reporter had upheld and granted planning permission and one which was dismissed.

APPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

305. The committee considered reports 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:-

- (i) 2017/0264/TP – Sub-division of feu and erection of detached dwellinghouse at rear with formation of access from Capelrig Road, Newton Mearns (Planning Permission in Principle) at 8 The Laurels, Newton Mearns by Amanda Flynn

The committee agreed that consideration of the application be continued to allow a site visit to take place.

- (ii) 2017/0406/TP – Erection of 21 flats with associated parking and formation of vehicular access off Capelrig Road at site at Capelrig Road (40 metres south of Walden House and opposite Capelrig Gardens), Newton Mearns by Westpoint Homes Limited

The Principal Planner summarised the details of the proposed development highlighting that the site was located in the Green Belt and that the application was being recommended for refusal. He advised that the grounds for refusal were similar to those the Reporter had used in the appeal decision relating to the Waterfoot application (i.e. Ref No:- 2017/0367/TP) which had been dismissed by the Reporter and which the committee had noted the terms of in the immediately preceding item of business.

Councillor Cunningham was heard in support of the proposed development in course of which she outlined a number of reasons why in her opinion the application should be granted. These included amongst other things the suitability of the proposed development for first time buyers or those wishing to downsize and that the site was located in an area that with a range of developments and had good transport links.

Whilst indicating that he did not support the reasons for the refusal of the application, Councillor Aitken stated that in his opinion, the application site was within the urban area; that it was not an incursion on the Green Belt and green network; and that there was a shortfall of housing land in East Renfrewshire.

Councillor Cunningham noted that the applicant was a local developer and in her opinion, the proposed development would create jobs which would be of economic benefit to the area.

In response to Councillor Convery who sought clarification of the Education Department's view of the proposal, the Principal Planner highlighted that the Education Department had stated that the site would present considerable difficulties for the school estate, particularly given the cumulative impact of the adopted Local Development Plan (LDP) and the proposed sites in LDP2.

Whilst noting that the neighbouring properties would be in excess of 20 metres from the proposed development, Councillor Miller sought clarification whether it would be possible to increase this distance to a minimum of 40 metres.

In reply, the Principal Planner explained that this would not be possible given the orientation of the application site and that the committee was required to give consideration to the application as submitted.

Councillor McLean stated that he did not accept the fact that the site was in the Green Belt as a basis to refuse the application as in his opinion, such an argument was somewhat diminished given the significant amount of development that had already taken place in close proximity to the application site.

At this stage, the committee agreed that it was disposed to grant the application, subject to:-

- (a) delegated powers being granted to officers in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the committee to attach appropriate conditions to the planning permission; and
 - (b) the issuing of planning permission following the conclusion of a legal agreement relating to the delivery of affordable housing and payment of development contributions.
- (iii) 2017/0754/TP – Installation of 2 ground based telecommunications cabinets opposite 1-1A Polnoon Street, Eaglesham by Mr Robert Carchies (In retrospect)

The Principal Planner referred to the site history in the course of which he highlighted that planning permission had been granted for the installation of two ground based telecommunications cabinets on 5 January 2017. However, he advised that during the installation of the cabinets the applicant had relocated them to their current location without first contacting the Planning Service.

Councillors Convery, McLean and Miller expressed concern that notwithstanding the fact that planning permission had been granted for the installation of 2 telecommunications cabinets the applicant had moved the cabinets from their approved location without first obtaining the necessary permission and had also installed cabinets which were larger than those which had been approved.

Councillor Ireland stated that she shared the concerns that had been expressed and stated that in her opinion, the proposed development was contrary to Policies D1 and D11 of the adopted East Renfrewshire Local Development Plan and that the application should be refused.

At this stage, the committee agreed that the application be refused on the grounds that the development was contrary to Policies D1 and D11 of the adopted East Renfrewshire Local Development Plan as the position and appearance of the cabinets had an adverse visual impact on the Conservation Area with a resultant loss of character and amenity to the surrounding area.

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**

Index of applications under the above acts considered by the Planning Applications
Committee on 14.02.2018

Reference No: 2017/0264/TP

Ward: 2

Applicant:

Amanda Flynn
8 The Laurels
Newton Mearns
East Renfrewshire
G77 6XR

Agent:

Alan Seath Planning Consultancy
88 Scott Road
Glenrothes
KY6 1AE

Site: 8 The Laurels, Newton Mearns, East Renfrewshire, G77 6XR

Description: Sub-division of feu and erection of detached dwellinghouse at rear with formation of access from Capelrig Road (planning permission in principle)

Decision: Continued for Site Visit

Reference No: 2017/0406/TP

Ward: 2

Applicant:

Westpoint Homes Ltd
3 Arthur Street
Clarkston
East Renfrewshire
G76 8BQ

Agent:

Fouin and Bell Architects Ltd
1 John's Place
Edinburgh
City of Edinburgh
EH6 7EL

Site: Site at Capelrig Road (40m south of Walden House and opposite Capelrig Gardens), Newton Mearns, East Renfrewshire

Description: Erection of 21 flats with associated parking and formation of vehicular access off Capelrig Road

Decision: Disposed to grant subject to conditions following the conclusion of a legal agreement relating to the delivery of affordable housing and payment of development contributions

Reference No: 2017/0568/TP

Ward: 5

Applicant:

East Renfrewshire Council
Mr. Raymond O'Kane
ERC Council Offices
2 Spiersbridge Way
G46 8NG

Agent:

BDP Limited
Colin Allan
15 Exchange Place
Glasgow
G1 3AN

Site: Site 300M east of 353 Ayr Road, Newton Mearns, East Renfrewshire

Description: Erection of non-denominational primary school with nursery provision together with associated playgrounds, sports pitch with floodlighting, parking, pedestrian and vehicular accesses (major)

Decision: Approved subject to conditions

Reference No: 2017/0754/TP

Ward: 5

Applicant:

Mr Robert Carchies
Alexander Bain House
James Watt Street
Glasgow
Scotland
G2 8LA

Agent:

Nick Hilton
The Stable
Codham Hall Lane
Brentwood
Essex
CM133jt

Site: Opposite 1-1A Polnoon Street, Eaglesham, East Renfrewshire

Description: Installation of no. 2 ground based telecommunications cabinets

Decision: Refused

MINUTE
of
AUDIT & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minute of Meeting held at 2.00pm in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 19 February 2018.

Present:

Councillor Stewart Miller (Chair)
Councillor Barbara Grant (Vice Chair)
Provost Jim Fletcher

Councillor Charlie Gilbert
Councillor Annette Ireland

Councillor Miller in the Chair

Attending:

Margaret McCrossan, Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer); Barbara Clark, Chief Accountant; Michelle Blair, Chief Auditor; Paul Parsons, Principal Accountant (Capital); Linda Hutchison, Clerk to the Committee; and Jennifer Graham, Committee Services Officer.

Apologies:

Councillors David Macdonald and Jim Swift.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

306. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY REPORT 2018/19

307. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 9 November 2017 (Page 194, Item 220 refers) when, having considered a report on treasury management activities for the first six months of 2017/18, it had been agreed to recommend to the Council approval of organisations for the investment of surplus funds, the committee considered a report by the Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer) explaining that, in line with the revised Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Treasury Management Code of Practice 2011, the Audit and Scrutiny Committee were responsible for ensuring effective scrutiny of the Council's treasury management strategy and policies.

In accordance with that requirement, a copy of the Treasury Management Strategy Report for 2018/19 was attached for consideration in advance of its submission to the Council. The Strategy Report included a proposal to amend treasury management practices in accordance with Annex F accompanying the report which listed organisations approved for the investment of surplus funds, required credit ratings, limits, and deposit periods. It was also proposed that a policy on the repayment of loans fund advances, as specified in Section 6.4 of the report, be approved.

Whilst commenting on the overall purpose and content of the report, the Chief Accountant referred to economic background information within it, explained that the same operational approach as in 2017/18 was being followed, and clarified that the report set out the parameters within which the treasury function operated, making reference to mid-year and annual reports to be submitted to the committee. Whilst itemising sections of the Strategy, she clarified that the Council could only borrow to fund capital expenditure, that the Prudential Indicators were established to ensure funding of capital expenditure was affordable and sustainable, and that the primary objectives of the investment strategy were security and liquidity. She also referred to the use of reserves to fund capital expenditure, historically low interest rates available at present, the gradual rise in interest rates anticipated over the next 3 years, types of investment the Council could use and their associated risk; and the importance of investing with bodies with good credit ratings. The Council's policy was to repay advances using an annuity method as in previous years.

The Chief Accountant also referred to treasury management training arranged for Members on 27 March 2018 to be provided by Link Asset Services, the Council's treasury advisors.

In response to questions, the Head of Accountancy and Chief Accountant provided clarification on various matters, including the effect of increased borrowing on revenue budgets. In response to Councillor Grant and Provost Fletcher and during discussion on the condition of roads within East Renfrewshire and related challenges and project and borrowing costs, the Chief Accountant confirmed that some information comparing the current annual cost of funding roads projects and repairs against the annual cost of borrowing the full level of capital expenditure needed to bring roads up to the required standard could be investigated to provide a sense of the challenges faced and enable comparison between the two funding methods.

In response to Councillor Ireland, other issues commented on included how the Council's treasury management advisors were appointed, how their value was assessed and reviewed regularly; and the extent to which Members could be required to attend training.

The committee agreed:-

- (a) **to recommend to the Council** that the Treasury Strategy Statement Report 2018/19 be approved, including the amendment of treasury management practices in accordance with Annex F to the report;
- (b) **to recommend to the Council** that the policy on the repayment of loans fund advances as specified in Section 6.4 of the report be approved;
- (c) that the Chief Accountant provide some further information comparing the current annual cost of funding roads projects and repairs and the annual cost of borrowing the full level of capital expenditure needed to bring roads up to the required standard for circulation to the committee by the Clerk on receipt; and
- (d) otherwise, to note the report.

MINUTE
of
LICENSING COMMITTEE

Minute of Meeting held at 2.00pm in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Eastwood Park, Giffnock, on 20 February 2018.

Present:

Councillor Angela Convery (Chair)
Councillor Alan Lafferty

Councillor Stewart Miller

Councillor Convery in the Chair

Attending:

Jacqui McCusker, Senior Solicitor; Liz Currie, Supported Housing Services and Private Sector Manager and Jillian McGrain, Principal Housing Officer (Private Sector) (Item 309 only); Brian Kilpatrick, Civic Government Enforcement Officer (Item 311 only); and Jennifer Graham, Committee Services Officer.

Also Attending:

Sergeant Scott Brown and Constable Lesley-Ann Stevenson, Police Scotland (Item 310 only).

Apologies:

Councillors Betty Cunningham and David Macdonald.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

308. 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 on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 6 and 14 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Act.

PRIVATE LANDLORD REGISTRATION

309. The committee considered a report by the Director of Environment regarding an application for inclusion on the Register of Social Landlords under the terms of the Antisocial Behaviour etc. (Scotland) Act 2004, as amended (Agenda Item 3 refers). The applicant was present. The Supported Housing Services/Private Sector Manager and the Principal Housing Officer (Private Sector) were also present.

The Principal Housing Officer (Private Sector) was heard in respect of the application and in response to questions from members.

The applicant was then heard in respect of the application and in response to questions from members

Following a brief discussion the committee agreed that the application for inclusion on the Register of Private Landlords be approved.

Variation in Order of Business

In accordance with Standing Order 19, Councillor Convery agreed to vary the order of business as printed on the agenda in order to facilitate the conduct of the meeting.

PRIVATE HIRE CAR DRIVER'S LICENCE – APPLICATION FOR GRANT

310. The committee considered a report by the Chief Officer - Legal & Procurement regarding an application for the grant of a Private Hire Car Driver's Licence (Agenda Item 5 refers). The applicant was present together with his friend. Sergeant Brown and Constable Stevenson representing the Chief Constable, who had made an objection in respect of the application, were also present.

The report explained that in determining the application it would be for the committee to decide what weight it wished to attach to the objection by the Chief Constable and its relevance to the type of licence being applied for.

Sergeant Brown was heard in respect of the objection submitted by the Chief Constable and in response to questions from Members.

The applicant was then heard in respect of the application and in response to questions from Members.

The committee having taken account of the submission by the applicant, his previous conviction, its seriousness and relevance to the licence being applied for, and also having taken account of the objection by the Chief Constable, agreed that the application be granted for a period of one year subject to standard conditions.

PRIVATE HIRE CAR DRIVER'S LICENCE – REQUEST FOR SUSPENSION

311. Under the Minute of the meeting held on 23 January 2018 (Page 253, Item 285 refers), when it was agreed to defer consideration of a request for suspension under Paragraph 11 of Schedule 1 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act (The Act) to allow

further information to be provided by the complainant and Police Scotland, the committee considered a report by the Chief Officer - Legal & Procurement requesting suspension of a Private Hire Car Driver's Licence under Paragraph 11 of Schedule 1 of the Act (Agenda Item 4 refers). The licensee was present. The complainant, who had been invited to the meeting, was not present.

It was reported that the licence had previously been suspended on 3 January 2018 in terms of Paragraph 12 of Schedule 1 of the Act, in the interests of public safety. However, this suspension was subsequently lifted, following discussion with members of the Licensing Committee, as no further information had been received from the Police Scotland and the complainant had indicated that she did not want to provide a statement.

After the suspension was lifted, a statement by the complainant was received leading to the submission of the report before the committee requesting consideration of a suspension of the licence under Paragraph 11 of Schedule 1 of the Act. The Civic Government Enforcement Officer was heard further regarding the report.

The applicant advised that he had no further information to add and responded to questions from Members.

The committee agreed that the Private Hire Car Driver's Licence should not be suspended under Paragraph 11 of Schedule 1 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982.

CHAIR

MINUTE
of
CABINET
(POLICE AND FIRE)

Minute of Meeting held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock, on 22 February 2018.

Present:

Councillor Colm Merrick (Chair)
Councillor Caroline Bamforth
Councillor Tony Buchanan

Councillor Barbara Grant
Councillor Alan Lafferty

Councillor Merrick in the Chair

Attending:

Lorraine McMillan, Chief Executive; Caroline Innes, Deputy Chief Executive; Jim Sneddon, Head of Democratic and Partnership Services; and Paul O'Neil, Committee Services Officer.

Also Attending:

Superintendent Donna Henderson and Inspector John McQuilter, Police Scotland; and Group Manager Mark Gallacher, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

Apologies:

Councillors Danny Devlin; Stewart Miller; and Paul O'Kane (Vice Chair).

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

312. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

POLICE SCOTLAND – PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE THIRD QUARTER OF FINANCIAL YEAR 2017/18

313. The Cabinet considered a report by the Divisional Commander, Police Scotland providing details of the performance of the police in East Renfrewshire over the third quarter of 2017/18. A statistical report giving a breakdown of various categories of crimes and offences committed during the reported period was appended to the report.

In the absence of Chief Superintendent Brian McNulty and Chief Inspector Angela Carty, it was noted that Superintendent Donna Henderson and Inspector John McQuilter were representing Police Scotland.

Superintendent Henderson provided some background information about her responsibilities within the Greater Glasgow Division, one of which was being Chief Inspector Carty's line manager. At this stage, she invited Inspector McQuilter to provide further details about the information contained in the performance report.

Inspector McQuilter began by highlighting that East Renfrewshire Police Scotland Youth Volunteers had completed their induction course and had been able to get involved in their first community project in December 2017 delivering Christmas hampers to pensioners. He summarised the performance of the police during the reported period by referring to the local policing priorities that were identified in the East Renfrewshire Local Policing Plan 2017/20. These were noted as Homes Being Broken Into; Anti-social Behaviour and Disorder; Violent Crime; Drug Dealing and Misuse; and Child Abuse Including Child Sexual Exploitation.

Whilst noting that the number of homes that had been broken into had decreased from 100 in the corresponding period the previous year to 92 in the reported period, and having noted that a number of arrests had been made, Inspector McQuilter emphasised the importance of communities working with the police to protect their homes through crime prevention measures, particularly in reporting anything that was out of the ordinary. He also highlighted that anti-social behaviour remained a community priority and that the police continued to focus their efforts on preventing disorder. Details of the objectives of the police in tackling this problem were outlined in the report. It was noted that one of the measures being taken to address the problem was the use of diversionary tactics where young people were being engaged in a programme of activities such as boxing and football amongst other things. In addition, campus officers continued to give talks to school pupils about the impact anti-social behaviour was having on their local communities.

Inspector McQuilter reported that in terms of violent crime, the recorded number of victims of violence had reduced when compared to the corresponding period the previous year and that there were no robberies recorded during the course of the reported period. He also highlighted that the festive season saw a rise in the demand for policing services due to an increase in acts of crime. However, as a result of the 'Winter Initiative Plan' which involved high visibility patrols engaging with local businesses and staff at licensed premises the police had seen a reduction in overall crime and no serious violence during that period. Furthermore, the number of domestic abuse victims continued to decrease and it was noted that the police continued their work with partner organisations such as East Renfrewshire Women's Aid and Advocacy, Support, Safety and Information Services (ASSIST).

Concluding his remarks, Inspector McQuilter provided details on the number of detections of drug dealing and misuse and the work of campus officers in raising awareness in young people about the threats of child abuse and child sexual exploitation. He also explained that in response to concerns expressed about the safety of children in and around schools at the start and end of the school day, the police were working in partnership with the Council to progress in the longer term the 'Park and Stride' project the aim of which was to discourage drivers from bringing their vehicles in close proximity to schools and to encourage healthy aspects of walking to school. He also advised that 2 schools were being chosen each day for police patrols to visit the aim of which was for officers to educate parents about road safety issues in and around schools.

There followed a short question and answer session in the course of which Superintendent Henderson and Inspector McQuilter responded to a number of questions and provided clarification on a range of operational issues within East Renfrewshire. These included campus officers; dealing with incidents of domestic abuse; road safety in and around schools and the measures being taken to tackle anti-social behaviour.

During the discussion of these issues, the Chief Executive advised that there were no plans in the Council's budget consultation that would impact on the continued operation of campus officers. Inspector McQuilter also indicated that the police were fully supportive of the work being carried out by campus officers.

Responding to a question about incidents of domestic abuse, Inspector McQuilter explained that all officers were trained to deal with such incidents although one of the problems the police faced in conducting their investigations into such incidents was that some victims were reluctant to co-operate and that as a result it was difficult to report such matters to the Procurator Fiscal service.

Inspector McQuilter also advised that the 'Park and Stride' project had been launched at Kirkhill Primary School, with proposals to roll the project out to other schools in the future. Superintendent Henderson and Inspector McQuilter also commented that the police would respond to any incidents of aggressive driver behaviour in and around schools and advised that any such incidents should be reported to them.

In response to a question regarding the absence of detection rates recorded in the report about anti-social behaviour, Inspector McQuilter explained the reason was that not every incident of anti-social behaviour resulted in a crime being committed.

The Cabinet noted the terms of the report.

SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE – PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE THIRD QUARTER OF 2017/18

314. The Cabinet considered a report by the Local Senior Officer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS), providing details of the performance of SFRS in East Renfrewshire during the third quarter of 2017/18. An analysis of the incidents in each of the Council's five electoral wards during the reported period was appended to the report.

In the absence of Local Senior Officer Graeme Binning and Group Manager Colin Martin, it was noted that Group Manager Mark Gallacher was representing SFRS.

Group Manager Gallacher reported that the performance of the service was measured against the key performance indicators detailed in the East Renfrewshire Local Fire and Rescue Plan 2014/17. These were noted as Accidental Dwelling Fires; All Non-Fatal Fire Casualties; Deliberate Fire Raising; Fires in Non-Domestic Buildings; Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals; and Road Traffic Collisions. He summarised the performance by comparing each of the indicators against the performance recorded in the corresponding period in 2017.

Whilst noting that the total number of accidental dwelling fires had increased from 13 in the corresponding period in 2016/17 to 25 in the current reported period although only 1 required an intervention by SFRS, Group Manager Gallacher highlighted that the total number of all non-fatal fire casualties had remained the same when compared to the corresponding period in 2016/17. He reported that the total number of incidents involving deliberate fire raising had seen a slight increase from 27 in the corresponding period in 2016/17 to 28 in the current reported period. Similarly the total number of fires in non-domestic buildings showed a slight increase from 6 in the corresponding period in 2016/17 to 7 in the current reported period. It was noted that the total number of unwanted fire alarm signals had increased from 54 in the corresponding period in 2016/17 to 78 in the current reported period.

Group Manager Gallacher also reported that the total number of road traffic collision incidents attended by SFRS which resulted in non-fatal casualties, had increased from 5 in the corresponding period in 2016/17 to 8 in the current reported period. The number of recorded casualties had increased from 8 in the corresponding period in 2016/17 to 11 in the current reported period. However, it was noted that there were no fatalities recorded within the reported period.

Whilst outlining the range of partnership and community engagement activities undertaken by SFRS during the third quarter of 2017/18, Group Manager Gallacher explained that these included attendance at the weekly meetings of the Greater Results in Partnership (GRIP) and providing support to the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) in relation to fire safety awareness training. Other activities included supporting the work of the SFRS autumn thematic action plan including presentations to a total of 2,080 secondary school pupils on firework talks and bonfire safety. In addition, the service continued to support partners in joint home fire safety visits within sheltered accommodation units and that the Community Action Team and Retired Employee Association (REA) volunteers had conducted 25 home fire safety visits for East Renfrewshire Telecare.

Group Manager Gallacher also reported that a total of 393 home fire safety visits had been carried out in East Renfrewshire during the third quarter of 2017/18, 39 of which were as a result of high risk referrals from East Renfrewshire Community Planning Partners and 84 as a result of Post Domestic Incident Responses (PDIR). He explained that the SFRS conducted a PDIR of all domestic dwelling incidents including fire alarm actuations and special services. This involved positive engagement with the occupier(s) of the affected property and neighbouring properties by SFRS personnel and where required SFRS provided and fitted 10 year battery powered smoke detectors.

There followed a short question and answer session in the course of which Group Manager Gallacher responded to and provided clarification on a number of questions in relation to operational issues in East Renfrewshire. These included accidental fires; the installation of sprinklers in buildings; factors associated with fire starting; and causes of unwanted fire alarm signals.

During the discussion of these issues, Group Manager Gallacher explained in terms of accidental fires whilst there no specific details in the report to suggest that age was a factor in this type of fire although he would review the age groups involved in such fires to establish if this was the case. In response to a question about what progress had been made regarding the installation of sprinklers into buildings, he advised that SFRS was campaigning for this to happen and that the Scottish Government was giving consideration to the matter. He also advised that distraction was now the main factor associated with fire starting whereas in the past alcohol had been one of the main factors.

In response to concerns expressed about unwanted fire alarm signals (UFAS), Group Manager Gallacher acknowledged that there were more false alarm signals in residential home/nursing homes and that SFRS attended a range of false alarm incidents due to faulty systems. He highlighted that SFRS had powers to take enforcement action against those premises that did not repair faulty systems and could reduce the number of visits to a set of premises if they had a history of false alarms.

The Cabinet noted the terms of the report.