

**MINUTE**  
**of**  
**CABINET**

**Minute of virtual meeting held at 10.00am on 26 November 2020.**

**Present:**

Councillor Tony Buchanan (Leader)  
Councillor Caroline Bamforth  
Councillor Danny Devlin

Councillor Alan Lafferty  
Councillor Colm Merrick  
Councillor Paul O'Kane

Councillor Buchanan, Leader, in the Chair

**Attending:**

Lorraine McMillan, Chief Executive; Mark Ratter, Director of Education; Andy Cahill, Director of Environment; Margaret McCrossan, Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer); Andy Corry, Head of Environment (Operations); Phil Daws, Head of Environment (Strategic Services); Lesley Bairden, Chief Finance Officer (HSCP); Mary Docherty, Education Resources Senior Manager; Sarah Jane Hayes, Customer Service Manager; Eamonn Daly, Democratic Services Manager; Linda Hutchison, Senior Committee Services Officer; and Liona Allison, Assistant Committee Services Officer.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**1430.** There were no declarations of interest intimated.

**CHARGING FOR SERVICES 2021/22**

**1431.** The Cabinet considered the undernoted reports by the appropriate Directors regarding the outcome of the charging for services exercises carried out in each of the departments and recommending proposed fees and charges for 2021/22.

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

- (i) Corporate and Community Services Department;
- (ii) Health and Social Care Partnership;
- (iii) Education Department; and
- (iv) Environment Department; and

The Cabinet, following discussion, agreed as follows:-

- (a) Corporate and Community Services Department
  - (i) to note that the statutory fees were set by the National Records of Scotland (NRS) in November each year; and

(ii) to increase all non-statutory fees and charges by 1.9% for 2021/22 in line with the forecasted rate of inflation.

(b) Health and Social Care Partnership

That the recommendations regarding fees and charges policies as proposed be approved.

(c) Education Department

That the recommendations regarding fees and charges policies as proposed be approved.

(d) Environment Department

That the recommendations regarding fees and charges policies as proposed be approved.

## **GARDEN WASTE CHARGING PROPOSAL**

**1432.** The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment, regarding proposals to commence charging for the collection of garden waste with effect from 1 April 2021 to generate income and help avoid service cuts.

Having confirmed that councils did not have a statutory duty to collect garden waste from domestic properties and that several already charged or intended to charge a supplement for collecting this waste stream, the report commented on the challenging financial position facing the Council for 2021/22 and beyond. Reference was made to a particular recommendation made by the Audit and Scrutiny Committee, and approved by the Cabinet, supporting the ongoing development of proposals by the Environment Department to generate new income or maximise potential income from various existing arrangements, including the collection of garden waste. In this context, the report proposed the introduction of a charging scheme for the optional collection of garden waste with effect from 1 April 2021. It was confirmed that all residents would still continue to receive a free weekly food waste collection.

The report summarised how the scheme could operate in practice through the application of a permit scheme, and the options residents had who did not wish to participate. It was clarified that there had been an uptake of between 50-70% of households in local authority areas which had introduced such charges, that the proposed scheme was more generous than those operated by many other Scottish councils, and that the service would be offered for 50 weeks per annum. The proposed fee was £40 per annum for one bin per household, to allow uptake to be assessed, but the possibility of additional garden waste bins per property would be investigated as soon as possible. The position on the collection of Christmas trees was clarified.

It was explained that, subject to approval of the report, preparations for the scheme would have to start in order to implement a payment system, produce permits, recruit additional administration/operational staff required, and communicate the scheme to members of the public. The report emphasised that the service required to be of a high quality and totally reliable, requiring some additional investment in fleet and staff. Although there would be some costs associated with the management, operation and supervision of the scheme, it was anticipated that net income of around £800k could be generated. It was clarified that the proposal formed part of the Environment Department's savings proposals for 2021/22.

Having emphasised the context within which the proposal was being made, the Director of Environment commented on the scheme in detail, including the operational arrangements, related capacity issues and preparations required in advance of the service commencing. A wide range of issues were discussed, including the overall financial position of the Council; and the lack of clarity on the 2021/22 financial settlement the Council would receive which would remain unclear until early in 2021. Other matters raised and discussed in detail included resource and operational issues regarding the scheme; some reservations regarding the proposal which Elected Members felt merited further consideration at this stage and prior to the proposal being approved; and challenges associated with implementing the scheme by April 2021 without advance preparation starting shortly. It was confirmed that the scheme would be discussed by the Budget Strategy Group.

The Cabinet, following detailed consideration, agreed:-

- (a) that the Director of Environment be authorised to progress further work on the implementation of the operational arrangements for the garden waste charging scheme; and
- (b) to note that the decision on whether or not to implement the scheme would be taken at a future meeting in conjunction with overall budget proposals when the Council's financial position was clearer.

## **COUNCIL NEW BUILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

**1433.** The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment, providing an update on the Council's ambitious new build housing programme.

The report explained that over the past 40 years, approximately 50% of rented housing stock owned by the Council had been sold through the Right to Buy scheme, the greatest proportion of properties sold having been more popular family homes in sought after areas, leaving a stock of just under 3,000 homes. Council housing remained highly sought after, with many people opting for the Council as a landlord rather than a private landlord or housing association. The Council also remained the area's most affordable housing provider.

It was highlighted that the ambition for the new build development programme had grown in the past few years, in respect of which, in November 2016, the Cabinet approved a proposal to build up to 120 Council houses in two phases subject to consultation. This included approximately 80 properties at four sites in Barrhead (phase 1), and a further 30-40 on the Eastwood side of the authority (phase 2). Subsequently, in January 2018, the Cabinet had approved a proposal for phase 3 to increase the new build project target from 120 to 240 units. It had been recognised then that the delivery of new housing could take 2-4 years, depending upon the infrastructure developments required beforehand.

The report confirmed that there had been infrastructure delays at phase 1 sites which had impacted on delivery of the project, and highlighted that the Maidenhill sites in phases 2 and 3 were not owned by the Council, with development times based on the progress of the landowners/house builders. It was clarified that subsidy funding was only available in annual tranches.

Further details on progress made on each phase and site and on related issues was provided, including the number of units to be built relative to the initial target set. Reference was also made to related procurement options and financial issues. The report confirmed that the proposals for all sites were discussed with local Tenant & Residents Associations,

and that Housing Services had written to all residents in the surrounding areas for the first 3 completed sites inviting them to comment on proposals. Although this approach would continue, online methods might need to be used for this due to COVID-19 related restrictions on public gatherings.

It was concluded that the ambitious council house new build programme was on track to deliver the target of 240 new council homes which, on completion, would include approximately 141 new homes in Barrhead and 101 in Newton Mearns. The programme had been designed not only to meet local housing needs, but also to make best use of the land availability in the area. Whilst ambitions remained to extend the programme further, clarity on the level and availability of Scottish Government grant funding was required to determine the feasibility of doing so.

The Cabinet, having welcomed the developments, agreed to note:-

- (a) progress made to date; and
- (b) the proposals for future developments.

#### **EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE (EXPANSION 2020)**

**1434.** The Cabinet noted that consideration of the report on Early Learning and Childcare (Expansion 2020) had been continued to a future meeting and the reason for this.

#### **GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2020/21**

**1435.** The Cabinet considered a report by the Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer), monitoring expenditure as at 30 September 2020 against the approved General Fund Capital Programme 2020/21 and recommending adjustments where necessary in light of issues that had arisen since the programme had been approved.

Whilst referring to the latest developments relating to the programme, including the latest income and expenditure movements and cash flow management issues, the report indicated that the projected shortfall of £425,000 which represented 0.91% of the resources available was within manageable limits.

The report highlighted that COVID-19 was continuing to have a significant effect on both the timing and cost of capital projects and the report reflected an element of rescheduling of current and future schemes in line with available resource capacity. These delays in the programme had resulted in a net decrease in borrowing required for the year of £0.040m. It was clarified that this was not a saving as the planned borrowing would just be delayed until future financial years.

The Cabinet:-

- (a) agreed to **recommend to the Council** that the movements within the General Fund Capital Programme 2020/21 be approved; and
- (b) noted the shortfall of £0.425m and that income and expenditure on the programme would be managed and reported on a regular basis.

## HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2020/21

**1436.** The Cabinet considered a joint report by the Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer) and Director of Environment, monitoring expenditure as at 30 September 2020 against the approved Housing Capital Programme 2020/21 and recommending adjustments where necessary in light of issues that had arisen since the programme had been approved.

Whilst referring to the latest developments relating to the programme, including the latest income and expenditure movements and cash flow management issues, the report indicated that the projected shortfall of £135,000 which represented 1.4% of the resources available was within manageable limits.

The Cabinet:-

- (a) agreed to **recommend to the Council** that the movements within the Housing Capital Programme 2020/21 be approved; and
- (b) noted the shortfall of £0.135m and that income and expenditure on the programme will be managed and reported on a regular basis.

CHAIR

