

**MINUTE**  
**of**  
**EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL**

**Minute of virtual meeting held at 7.00pm on 30 June 2021.**

**Present:**

Provost Jim Fletcher	Councillor Alan Lafferty
Councillor Paul Aitken	Councillor David Macdonald
Councillor Caroline Bamforth	Councillor Colm Merrick
Councillor Tony Buchanan (Leader)	Councillor Stewart Miller
Councillor Angela Convery	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; Mark Ratter, Director of Education; Andy Cahill, Director of Environment; Julie Murray, Chief Officer - Health and Social Care Partnership; Margaret McCrossan, Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer); Sharon Dick, Head of HR and Corporate Services; Louise Pringle, Head of Communities, Revenues & Change; Debbie Hill, Chief Procurement Officer; Jamie Reid, Strategic Insight and Communities Senior Manager; Graeme Smith, Communications Manager; Eamonn Daly, Democratic Services Manager; Sharon McIntyre, Committee Services Officer and Liona Allison, Assistant Committee Services Officer.

**Apologies:**

Deputy Provost Cunningham, and Councillors Devlin and McLean.

**PROVOST ALEX MACKIE**

**1688.** Provost Fletcher referred to the recent sad death of Mr Alex Mackie, a former East Renfrewshire councillor, and Provost from 2007 until 2012.

Having heard Provost Fletcher comment that Mr Mackie had been a highly respected councillor and offer sympathies to his family on behalf of the Council, the Council observed a minute’s silence in his honour.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**1689.** There were no declarations of interest intimated.

## **MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**1690.** Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Council on 28 April, (Page 1512, Item 1627 refers), Councillor Wallace requested an update on officers pro-actively seeking Fields in Trust status for the recreational area commonly known as the 'lower playing fields and woods' that adjoined the existing King George V Playing Field (Giffnock), known as 'Huntly Park'.

Having heard the Director of Environment advise that progression of a memorandum of understanding was underway, the Council:-

- (a) noted the position; and
- (b) approved the Minute.

## **MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES**

**1691.** The Council considered and approved the Minutes of the meetings of the undernoted:-

- (a) Audit & Scrutiny Committee – 29 April 2021;
- (b) Cabinet – 13 May 2021;
- (c) Planning Applications Committee – 19 May 2021;
- (d) Local Review Body – 19 May 2021;
- (e) Cabinet – 3 June 2021;
- (f) Licensing Committee – 8 June 2021;
- (g) Local Review Body – 9 June 2021;
- (h) Education Committee – 10 June 2021;
- (i) Cabinet (Police & Fire) – 17 June 2021; and
- (j) Audit & Scrutiny Committee – 24 June 2021.

## **GLASGOW CITY REGION CITY DEAL UPDATE**

**1692.** Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Cabinet of 3 June 2021 (Page 1540, Item 1656 refers), when it was agreed amongst other things to recommend to the Council to approve the revised projects and budgets to be delivered within the remaining resources available, the Council considered a report by the Director of Environment, providing an update on the progress with the Glasgow City Region City Deal projects in East Renfrewshire.

The report provided detailed proposals for revising the programme in terms of scope, cost and timescale given that all City Deal projects had to be delivered by 2025 in terms of the current funding arrangements. The report noted that the Glasgow City Region Project Management Office had asked City Region Member Authorities (MA's) to revise their programmes taking into account deliverability and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on costs and timescales.

Welcoming the report and commending the work to date on the projects, Councillor Miller sought clarification of the timeline for the finalisation of the Country Park and Aurs Road realignment including the length of time the road would be closed to through traffic. He also sought confirmation regarding the final cost of the railway station referring to the increase in the final costs for the Robroyston station and questioned the lack of partner organisation contributions towards the cost of the station, referring to various organisations that had contributed financially to the Robroyston project.

In response, Councillor Buchanan advised that the Council was seeking to focus on delivery of these projects as soon as possible. Referring to the lengthy discussions that had taken place at the Cabinet he explained that costs for Robroyston train station had been used as a reference point in finalising costings for the Barrhead station although construction costs had subsequently increased significantly as a result of Brexit and the COVID-19 pandemic. Every effort was being made to mitigate costs as much as possible.

The Director of Environment then confirmed that the Robroyston station costings had been used as a benchmark for the new Barrhead station. He confirmed that the project was funded through City Deal and had been put forward by the Council. The Robroyston station project was not funded through City Deal but through alternative funding arrangements with contributions from various partners. Notwithstanding, discussions on a possible financial contribution would take place with Transport Scotland. He advised that once project costs had been confirmed he would carry out a value engineering exercise to see if costings could be reduced without being detrimental to the facility produced. He advised of a start date of 2023 for the railway station, 2023 for the Country Park visitor facilities with this start date being dependent on the completion of the Aurs Road improvements, and spring 2022 for the start of the Aurs Road improvement works. Updates would be provided to Cabinet or Council as appropriate prior to the letting of contracts to ensure Members were fully aware of project costs and implications prior to the projects being implemented.

Councillor Lafferty, having noted that the inclusion of the lift and a bridge had increased costings, welcomed the new station.

Councillor Wallace questioned the environmental impact of the proposed projects. He also referred to proposals to use £1 million of developer contributions and whether this would adversely impact any other projects.

Councillor Swift also expressed concerns in relation to the potential costs of the railway station. He referred to the increases that had already been seen in projected costs for the new Eastwood Leisure Centre and Theatre and stated that the Council needed to improve in terms of producing more accurate forecasts when developing projects. In respect of the business incubator he questioned how many businesses had signed up for the business incubator and what support was being provided to these businesses.

In response the Director of Environment advised that he would be undertaking a review of tree planting in East Renfrewshire under the wider East Renfrewshire adaptation and sustainability strategy and would ensure that any final plans contained appropriate mitigation against environmental impact. Acknowledging the comments regarding project forecasting, he reminded Members that some of the projects had originated a number of years ago and section 16 of the report explained the reasons for the increased costs for the railway station.

He advised communication had continued with the businesses in relation to the Greenlaw facility although the site was currently being used by the NHS as a testing facility during the pandemic. Occupation of the site would take place when it was possible and in accordance with Scottish Government guidelines.

Councillor Wallace having reinforced the need to balance environmental factors in developments, Councillor Buchanan responded by highlighting the public transport improvements and active travel opportunities provided by the Aurs Road improvements which would not only develop wellbeing and access points across the authority as well as having positive environmental impacts.

The Council:-

- (a) noted the progress made on the development and implementation of East Renfrewshire's £44 million City Deal programme;
- (b) approved the revised projects and budgets to be delivered within the remaining resources available; and
- (c) noted that the revised projects and budgets would now be submitted to the Glasgow City Region Project Management Office for approval through the appropriate City Region governance channels.

### **STATEMENTS BY CONVENERS/REPRESENTATIVES ON JOINT BOARDS/ COMMITTEES**

**1693.** The following statements were made:-

(a) **Councillor Bamforth – Integration Joint Board**

Councillor Bamforth reported on the business considered at the Health and Social Care Partnership Integration Joint Board on the 23 June. She advised that the focus of the meeting was finance, with the Chief Financial Officer presenting the unaudited annual report and accounts and the medium term financial plan. It was noted some financial challenges lay ahead, in particular because of the increased demand faced across the Health and Social Care Partnership.

She advised that the Child Poverty Action Plan was discussed this is also on the agenda for this meeting. The meeting concluded with an update on performance and the Health and Social Care Partnership's Recovery and Renewal Programme. Tributes were paid to Candy Millard, Head of Adult Health and Social Care Localities for her significant contribution to health and social care in East Renfrewshire over the previous 15 years and she was wished a happy and healthy retirement.

(b) **Councillor Merrick – Convener of Community Services & Community Safety**

Councillor Merrick provided an update on the recovery of the East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure Trust during the pandemic. He explained that in relation to sports and physical activity, swimming lessons had recommenced along with indoor fitness classes and membership fees were once again being collected.

Eastwood High School Sports Centre was reopening for groups and clubs. Revised guidance for operations which should allow for the further removal of restrictions for customers was awaited.

Mass Vaccinations continued to be supported at Eastwood Park and Barrhead Foundry, with planning for a transition from East Renfrewshire Council Leisure staff to volunteer staffing underway.

Councillor Merrick then provided an update on library and information services, advising that the seven libraries currently open were operating under

reduced hours. Planning was underway for the remaining three libraries – Busby, Netherlee and Uplawmoor – to re-open, and also for the removal of the temporary opening hours across the service. Busby library was currently closed for refurbishment and was expected to re-open again in August. There was no firm date for the restoration of the normal opening hours but it is likely that it would align with the expected removal of the tier system and associated restrictions in August. In the meantime it was noted that the summer reading programme which was traditionally exceptionally popular in East Renfrewshire has started the previous week.

Councillor Merrick then provided an update on the enrichment programme with the Health and Social Care Partnership. In April the East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure Trust launched a pioneering programme of activities for vulnerable young people who had been especially effected during lockdown. Working with colleagues in Social Work, the Trust had created dedicated sessions that included a film club, virtual-reality experiences, cookery, archery, trampolining, dance and drama, hill-walking and swimming. In May, Pulse FM broadcast a set from two of the young people who had participated in the DJ class.

Councillor Merrick advised that the summer holiday programme was now booked and would go live next week at sites across the authority. Provision had been further enhanced as part of the government's get into summer programme for young people.

Finally, Councillor Merrick reported that whilst the theatre was still closed an SQA-accredited "Technical Theatre in Practice" course had been developed in partnership with the Education Department and St. Luke's High School. The course covered legislation and practice; design; sound operations; lighting operations; and a creative practical project, and would go live in the new academic year.

(c) **Councillor Merrick – Vice-Chair of Education Committee**

Councillor Merrick reported on the business considered at the Education Committee on 23 June, details of which were contained in the Minute of the meeting. Tributes were paid to Fiona Morrison, Head of Education Services (Performance and Provision) for her significant contribution to education in East Renfrewshire over the previous 25 years and she was wished a happy and healthy retirement.

The Council noted the statements.

## **APPOINTMENTS**

**1694.** The Council considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive, seeking the appointment of Elected Members to various posts.

Councillor Buchanan advised of an update to the documentation circulated in that it was now proposed Councillor Ireland be appointed to the Licensing Committee and Licensing Board as replacement for Councillor O'Kane. He and other Elected Members congratulated Councillor O'Kane on his election to the Scottish Parliament.

Councillor Macdonald advised that he would be prepared to represent the Council on the Clyde and Loch Lomond Local Plan District Joint Committee should this position require to be filled. The Democratic Services Manager advised that he would clarify if there was a vacancy and if required submit a report to the next meeting.

In response to a question from Councillor Miller, the Democratic Services Manager advised that training would be arranged for Councillor Ireland to enable her to take up her role as a member of the Licensing Board.

Councillor O'Kane having thanked Elected Members for their kind words following his election as an MSP, discussion took place on the challenges facing the Council to delivering effective governance following the reduction from 20 to 18 councillors at the last boundary review, with reference being made to comparative numbers both in Europe and other Scottish councils.

Councillors O'Kane and Buchanan confirmed that they would continue to press for an increase in the number of Elected Members.

The Council agreed the appointment of Elected Members to the various posts as set out below:

<b>POSITION</b>	<b>APPOINTED</b>
Deputy Leader/representative on COSLA Convention/East Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership Board	Councillor Lafferty
Convener for Education and Equalities/Chair of Education Committee/representative on COSLA Children and Young Persons Board	Councillor Lafferty
Convener for Environment/representative on COSLA Environment and Economy Board	Councillor Cunningham
Cabinet (including Vice Chair)	Councillor Cunningham Vice Chair Councillor Lafferty
Cabinet (Police & Fire) (including Vice Chair)	Councillor Cunningham Vice Chair Councillor Lafferty
Education Committee	Provost Fletcher
Teaching Staff Appeals Committee (including Chair)	Councillor Lafferty
Joint Consultative Committee (1 <sup>st</sup> Tier)	Councillor Lafferty
Licensing Committee/Board	Councillor Ireland
APSE	Provost Fletcher
Clyde and Loch Lomond Local Plan District Joint Committee	Provost Fletcher (Sub)

East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure Trust	Councillor Buchanan
East Renfrewshire Integration Joint Board	Provost Fletcher
East Renfrewshire Renewable Energy Fund	Councillor Lafferty Provost Fletcher
Glasgow and the Clyde Valley SPDA Joint Committee	Provost Fletcher
Glasgow City Region Education Committee	Councillor Lafferty
Renfrewshire Valuation Joint Board	Provost Fletcher
Renfrewshire Educational Trust	Councillor Lafferty
Scottish Councils Committee on Radioactive Substances (SCCORS)	Provost Fletcher
Strathclyde Concessionary Travel Scheme Joint Committee	Provost Fletcher
Strathclyde Partnership for Transport	Provost Fletcher

#### **AMENDMENT TO APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

**1695.** The Council considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive seeking homologation of the decision taken to amend the membership of the Appointments Committee for the meeting held on 20 May 2021 and reviewing the recruitment process for Chief Officers.

Councillor Buchanan outlined the recent appointments process highlighting the pressures of work of Elected Members and the impact on the recruitment process. He proposed that rather than Head of Service recruitment being carried out only by officers, when Appointments Committees were established provision would be made for the appointment of substitutes on the committee. Elected Members were in agreement with this proposal.

Councillor Wallace thanked Provost Fletcher for stepping in to enable the committee to continue the recruitment process. He highlighted the importance of members' involvement in the recruitment of heads of service and that the inclusion of substitutes on the committees was a welcome way of ensuring the committee could go ahead when Elected Members needed to withdraw due to unforeseen circumstances.

Councillor Miller also welcomed the inclusion of substitutes in the appointments process.

The Council agreed :-

- (a) to homologate the decision to amend the membership of the Appointments Committee of the appointment of Provost Fletcher in substitute for Councillor O'Kane and
- (b) that the recruitment process for Head of Service, Directors and the Chief Executive would remain inclusive of elected member involvement and that when Appointments Committees were established provision would be made for the appointment of substitutes.

## **PROVOST'S ENGAGEMENTS**

**1696.** 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 meeting on 28 April 2021.

## **GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2021/22**

**1697.** The Council considered a report by the Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer), recommending approval of adjustments to the General Fund Capital Programme 2021/22, approved on 15 March 2021, resulting from finalisation of the previous year's programme and in light of subsequent information.

The report highlighted the latest developments relating to the programme, including the latest income and expenditure movements and cash flow management issues and indicated that the projected shortfall of £0.443m represents 0.96% of the resources available and is within manageable limits. Detailed explanations of the reasons for the major movements within the programme were outlined in the report.

Councillor Ireland noted the deferral of the window replacement programmes at Carolside, St Luke's and Woodfarm schools and enquired as to when these works would take place.

Councillor Wallace enquired regarding the source of the developer contributions of £1.230 million and queried why the capital costs of the Eastwood Park Leisure development were listed at £26 million instead of the higher figure of £55 million referred to in the Eastwood Masterplan report considered by the Council on 25 February 2021.

In response the Director of Environment advised that supply chain issues were impacting the window replacement programmes and it was intended these programmes would be rescheduled to next year. He clarified that developer contributions were collated in general category funds e.g. for open spaces, parks, libraries etc. therefore the £1.230 million has not been taken from another area.

Thereafter the Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer) advised that the Eastwood Park Leisure refurbishment was showing as £26 million as the report focussed on the in-year spend for 2021/22. The approved option of spend up to £55 million had been accounted for in the Council's 10 year capital modelling and updated figures would be included in future reporting.

The Council:-

- (a) noted and approved the movements within the programme; and
- (b) noted the shortfall of £0.443m and that income and expenditure on the programme will be managed and reported on a regular basis.

## **HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2021/22**

**1698.** The Council considered a joint report by the Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer) and the Director of Environment, recommending adjustments to the 2021/22 Housing Capital Programme, approved on 25 February 2021, resulting from the finalisation of the previous year's programme and in light of subsequent information.

The report highlighted the latest developments relating to the programme, including the latest income and expenditure movements and cash flow management issues and indicated that the projected shortfall of £0.160m represents 0.81% of the resources available and is within manageable limits. Detailed explanations of reasons for the major movements within the programme were outlined in the report.

The Council:-

- (a) noted and approved the current movements within the programme;
- (b) noted the shortfall of £0.160m and that income and expenditure on the programme will be managed and reported on a regular basis.

### **LOCAL CHILD POVERTY ACTION REPORT (YEAR 3)**

**1699.** The Council considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive, presenting the third East Renfrewshire Local Child Poverty Action Report required under the Child Poverty Scotland Act 2017. The Local Child Poverty Action Report had been approved for publication at the meeting of the East Renfrewshire Integration Joint Board on 23 June 2021.

The Local Child Poverty Action Report represented a 'step change' in action to address child poverty locally, and the report outlined the excellent work currently being delivered and new and innovative efforts to tackle child poverty.

The report referred to the targets for the Scottish Government to significantly reduce child poverty in Scotland by 2030, as set out in the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017. It explained that the Act also placed a duty on health boards and local authorities to work together to develop, produce and deliver LCPARs. The reports were expected to represent a step change in action to address child poverty at a local level, describing both work already under way as well as outlining future plans to tackle child poverty.

Councillor Ireland thanked the Council and all partners for their work on the increasing the number of businesses in East Renfrewshire providing the Living Wage and enquired about the composition and meeting arrangements of the East Renfrewshire Living Wage Action Group.

Councillor Wallace referred to the infographics in the report which detailed that those living in East Renfrewshire received the highest average weekly pay in Scotland although those working in East Renfrewshire received the lowest average weekly pay in Scotland and enquired how the Council could assist businesses to provide the Living Wage.

In response, the Director of Environment advised that he would provide Councillor Ireland with the information she sought in due course and explained that the low average weekly pay levels were due to the nature of the availability of the jobs available in East Renfrewshire these being primarily in the hospitality and retail sectors which offered lower wages.

The Director of Environment, Chief Procurement Officer and Councillor Buchanan explained that work was taking place with local businesses to be tender ready to enable them to bid for public sector and local government contracts. Local entrepreneurs were being encouraged and supported to stay and develop their businesses within the local area.

Councillor Wallace referred to the importance of the Council paying local business quickly to ensure the availability of cash flow.

Councillor Aitken suggested that Brexit may remove some EU restrictions in relation to local procurement. He further noted that larger businesses paying higher wages tended to be located outwith East Renfrewshire.

Councillor Macdonald commented on the number of vacant shop units in the area and that high rateable values was a disincentive to new traders.

The Council considered and approved the Child Poverty Action Report for publication.

## **STRATEGIC END-YEAR COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2020/21**

**1700.** The Council considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive, providing a summary of Council performance at end-year 2020-21 based on performance indicators in the Outcome Delivery Plan (ODP) 2020-23 as well as reflecting some key areas of the Council's response to supporting residents and communities during the pandemic. An end-year complaints report was included.

The report outlined that the Council was performing well across the majority of the ODP indicators considering the additional services created and resources required to respond to the pandemic and noted that the pandemic would continue to have an impact on future performance and delivery of services. Despite growing challenges the Council's aim remained unchanged in making people's lives better and achieving positive outcomes for all of communities the communities in East Renfrewshire.

Having welcomed the reduction in sickness absence, Councillor Miller referred to the time taken to process complaints and that these should be processed as quickly as possible.

Councillor Swift also noted the reduction sickness absence enquiring as to how this figure could be improved further to be in greater alignment with the national average of 5 days. He also noted the reduction in attendance at libraries and physical activity.

In response, the Head of HR and Corporate Services advised that home working had reduced general illness and this trend had been seen across the country. Reference was also made to the recently started 'Way We Work' project which was reviewing working practices emerging from the pandemic. She also noted that the sickness and absence figures were a result of the higher level of manual labour positions and older employees at the Council. She advised that the Council was also focussing on the mental health of employees.

Councillor Buchanan noted the impact of the pandemic on staff, including the requirement of providing additional services over and above their normal duties, and offered thanks to staff over the last year for their resilience.

Councillor Wallace noted that the 90% target for street cleaning had consistently been exceeded and suggested increasing this to 95% given the highlighted importance of the local environment on wellbeing during the pandemic. Councillor Macdonald also referred to the issue of littering and would welcome the development of an approach to reducing littering which was based on education and engagement.

In response to Councillor Swift's earlier point regarding the reduction in the use of libraries, the Director of Education advised that the use of e-books continued to impact the use of libraries although he highlighted the success of initiatives such as the summer reading programme.

Councillor Wallace noted that the percentage of respondents who agreed/strongly agreed that they felt a strong sense of belonging to their local community had reduced from 76% to 49% suggesting that this demonstrated how the impact of the pandemic continued to be felt in communities.

Following discussion, the Council noted the performance at end-year 2020-21 and the end-year complaints report.

#### **OUTCOME DELIVERY PLAN 2021-2024**

**1701.** The Council considered a report by the Chief Executive, providing details of the draft Outcome Delivery Plan 2021-24 which set out the Council's contribution to the delivery of its strategic outcomes for East Renfrewshire. A copy of the ODP was appended to the report.

The report explained that targets for indicators in the ODP were not included in the plan for the year 2020-21 due to the pandemic and had now been reviewed and reset based on new baseline data. 2 indicators had been removed from the ODP reducing the number of indicators to 48. Targets had been included for the 3-year period for the majority of indicators and the Education Department was currently reviewing and developing new targets which would support schools to measure progress towards building back fairer and better, post COVID-19.

Councillor Miller noted the projected population increase and the effects this would have on education facilities and the impact of new housing on green spaces; whilst Councillor Swift noted the decrease in male life expectancy and commented on some of the means by which the Council could focus on this figure.

The Council approved the Outcome Delivery Plan 2021-2024 and noted that targets had been reintroduced to the plan this year for the majority of indicators, re-baselined to reflect the impact of COVID-19.

#### **COMMUNITY PLAN - ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2020-21 AND FAIRER EAST REN TRANSITION PLANS 2021-22- REPORT**

**1702.** The Council considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive, presenting the 2020-21 annual progress report on the Community Plan, including Fairer East Ren (Local Outcome Improvement Plan); and the proposed 2021-22 transition plans for Fairer East Ren.

Councillor Buchanan highlighted the work with the Council's Community Planning partners including voluntary agencies, during a difficult year where communities were supported in ways that could never have been imagined.

Following consideration the Council approved the Community Plan Annual Progress Report for 2020-21 and the Fairer East Ren transition plans for 2021-22.

#### **UPDATE ON TEMPORARY WORKS QUICK QUOTE THRESHOLD TO SUPPORT COVID-19 CONSTRUCTION RECOVERY**

**1703.** The Council considered a report by the Chief Executive, providing an update on the temporary amendment to Standing Orders Relating to Contracts to support the Council's response to COVID-19 construction recovery by increasing the works Quick Quote threshold

from £150,000 to £500,000. A summary of the 7 contracts let under the terms of the temporary amendment accompanied the report.

Following a review of the temporary amendment the report sought permission to permanently increase the threshold to £500,000 for works contracts awarded through Quick Quote. This would continue to accelerate small works contracts and was in line with The Procurement Reform Scotland Act 2014 and the Construction Procurement Handbook 2018.

Councillor Buchanan provided an overview of the procurement process using Quick Quote since June 2020 advising that the online quotation facility allowed reduced timescales for procurement whilst maintaining formal procurement requirements. He highlighted that the process was used by other local authorities for awarding contracts of higher values up to £2 million.

Councillor Wallace and Councillor Miller acknowledged the reasoning behind the proposals and the attraction for local businesses to tender through this process whilst Councillor Swift highlighted the consideration of best value when operating within a local market.

In response, the Chief Procurement Officer provided a background on the Quick Quote process emphasising that this was a rigorous and transparent process.

The Council:-

- (a) approved the permanent increase of the works Quick Quote threshold from £150,000 to £500,000; and
- (b) noted works activity undertaken from June 2020 to the current date using the increased threshold, as detailed in the report.

## **COVID-19 RECOVERY ACTIONS UPDATE**

**1704.** The Council considered a report by the Chief Executive, providing Elected Members with a further update on response, recovery and renewal work taking place across the Council and the Trust.

The Council noted:-

- (a) the ongoing work on response, recovery and renewal;
- (b) that ongoing service delivery levels were still affected by staff involvement in response and recovery activities as well as the less efficient operating practices required to meet Coronavirus protocols; and
- (c) the continued additional workload of many staff.

## **CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2022**

**1705.** The Council considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive, seeking approval for the 2022 meetings calendar. Details of the factors that had been taken into consideration in the preparation of the calendar were outlined in the report.

Confirmation was sought from Councillor Macdonald that the reduction in the number of some meetings was a result of 2022 being an election year. In response, the Democratic Services Manager confirmed that this was the case.

The Provost also sought confirmation that the new administration would be able to review the timetable should it so wish. In response, the Democratic Services Manager confirmed that this was correct and that committees themselves could also update their meeting schedules as necessary.

The Council approved the 2022 meetings calendar; and noted the dates of meetings of the Integration Joint Board.

PROVOST

